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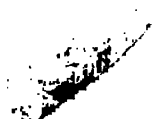
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Frontispiece.

CHASE OF THE "CRISTOBAL-COLON."

Page 286.



Adelie penguin, Antarctica

CLEARED FOR ACTION

A STORY OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN
WAR OF 1898

BY

WILLIS BOYD ALLEN

AUTHOR OF "NAVY BLUE," "THE NORTH PACIFIC," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE A. TRAVER



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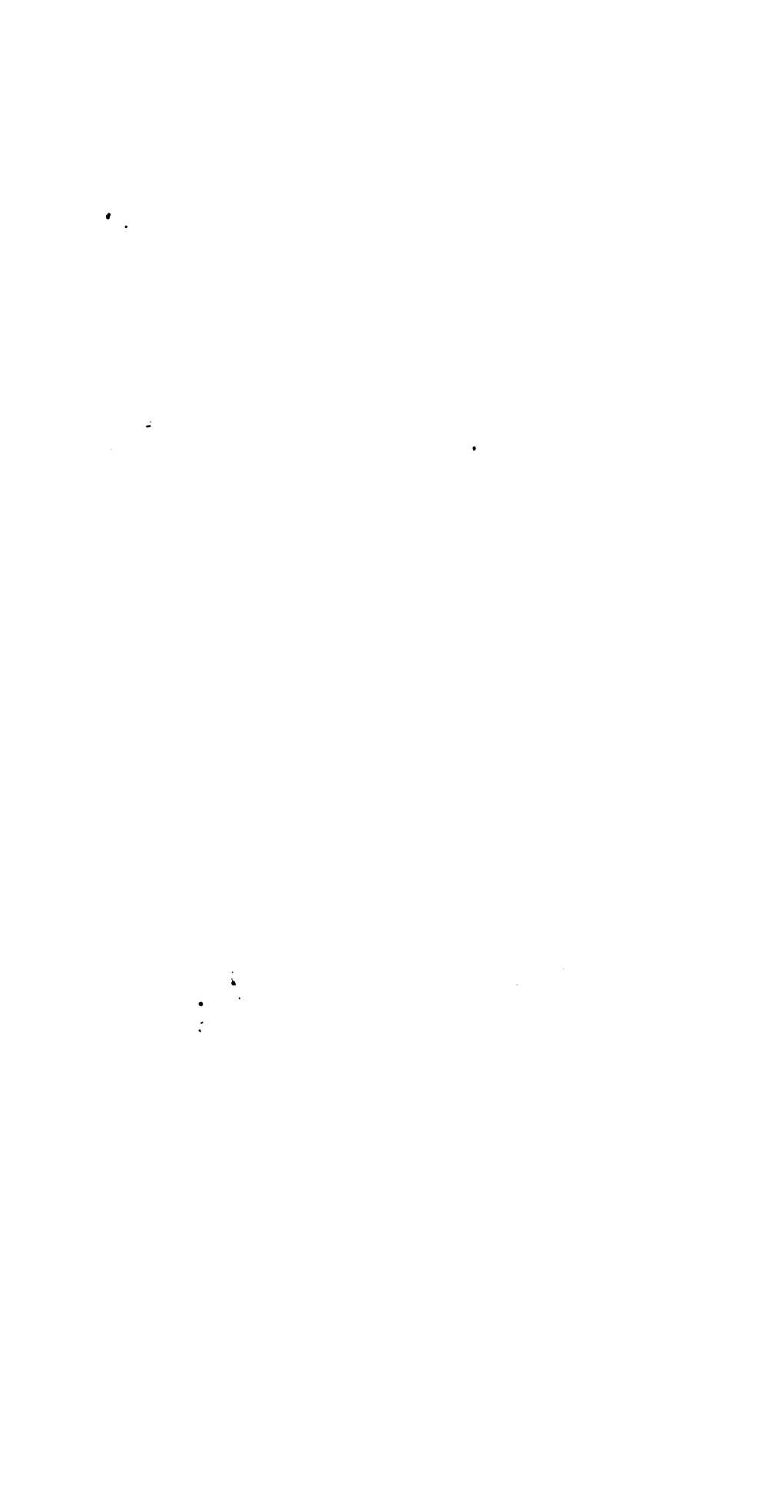
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CLEARED FOR ACTION.

CHAPTER I.

“REMEMBER THE ‘MAINE’!”

“The *Maine* was blown up last night, sir! Over two hundred lives lost!”

Ensign David Rexdale, of the armoured cruiser *Portsmouth*, held a crumpled newspaper in one hand and his cap in the other, as he breathlessly announced the terrible news to the commander of his ship.

Captain Selborne, who had been writing to his wife and describing the humdrum life in the squadron at Key West, had frowned a little at the interruption when the young ensign knocked at his cabin door. As he heard the astounding message which at that moment was flying on wings of fire all over the civilised world, he wheeled sharply in his chair and faced his informant.

“Blown up! Nonsense!—the Spaniards would n’t

dare—in a peaceful harbour—give me the paper, sir!”

Rexdale smoothed the sheet with trembling hand and silently presented it. The great black letters, covering half the first page, told the story.

The frown on Captain Selborne's face deepened as he read the brief account of the disaster in Havana harbour on the night of February 15, 1898.

“Poor fellows! Poor fellows!” he muttered under his breath. Then, controlling himself with an effort: “Mr. Rexdale, pass the word to Mr. Smart that I wish to see him at once.”

The ensign saluted and withdrew to carry out the order. Fifteen minutes later it was known throughout the ship that no shore leave would be granted till further notice. There was some grumbling among the more careless and idle of the crew, but for the most part they forgot all personal grievances in fierce resentment at what they believed to be a piece of Spanish villainy; and as they talked, in little groups, they glanced eagerly from time to time toward the flagship *New York*, where the signals were already fluttering.

“‘Steam up, and ready,’” translated Rexdale, as he glanced toward the big white cruiser, riding at anchor half a mile away. “What do you think, Tickerson—shall we be before Havana to-night?”

The young officer addressed wore a uniform simi-

lar to Rexdale's. He was shorter than his companion, but his frame was erect and well-knit, and his face bronzed by exposure to sun and wind.

"Hardly, Dave," he answered. "It would be almost a declaration of war to make a demonstration before the city at such a time. But something will come of this affair, and quick enough for all hands, too. Do you suppose Holmes has reached his ship?"

"Oh, yes. He was due in Hong Kong three weeks ago, Annie wrote me. If there's a mess out there, he'll be in it."

"How far from the station are the Philippines?"

"About six hundred miles, I believe. I'll warrant Dewey has the same signals flying on the *Olympia* this minute," he added, with another swift glance at the *New York*. "Hullo, there's 'Quarters' now. Come on, Girlie!"

While the officers and crew are springing to their positions at the long roll of the drum, for their morning drill, we have time to look back hastily over the past twelvemonth.

Dave Rexdale and "Girlie" Tickerson were cadets in the same class at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, and on their graduation had been assigned, with rank of ensign, to the cruiser *Portsmouth*.

The battleship *New Hampshire* was launched

at about the same time, but although hundreds of workmen were labouring night and day upon her, under "rush orders," she was still far from ready for sea service.

In January the *Portsmouth* was ordered to Key West, where the North Atlantic squadron quietly rendezvoused (for "sea-drill") at the first appearance of a war-cloud in the tropics.

Tickerson, having bid his pretty fiancée a tender farewell under the Annapolis elms, hastened at once to join his ship, to which he had been fortunate enough to secure an assignment in the same mess with his old friend Rexdale. Saunders, whose Academy name of "Sandy" still clung to him, was now a married man, but remained in the navy and had accompanied Norman Holmes to China, where they were assigned to the *Boston*, on the Asiatic station at Hong Kong; Holmes's position being that of assistant engineer and Saunders's that of ensign.

During the winter the clouds over the beautiful but unhappy island of Cuba darkened every day. The insurrection against Spanish rule was again and again officially reported (from Madrid) to be at an end, totally crushed. But in other columns of the very newspapers announcing the pacification of the island would appear accounts of insurgent victories, and, as the winter wore drearily on, of a terrible

death-rate among the Spanish soldiery, as well as the native population, from disease and starvation.

The order had gone forth from Havana, "concentrating" the nominally neutral peasantry in and about the large towns and cities. Hundreds of thousands of *reconcentrados*, as they were called, were driven from their country homes and herded in squalid encampments along the outskirts of the already overpopulated cities. Mismanagement, cruelty, and oppression left these countless multitudes without work, without food, without hope. They died until they lay in heaps among their wretched huts. Starving mothers, clasping their wailing infants in their shrivelled arms, pleaded in vain for help from their bewildered, incompetent, relentless rulers.

It was hard work for Uncle Sam to listen to these cries, within four hours' sail of his shores, and not interfere. At length the country could bear it no longer. Stern protests flew across the wires from Washington to Madrid. Ships were heavily freighted with food and despatched from American ports to the suffering Cubans. President McKinley and his Cabinet strained every nerve to right the great wrong without recourse to actual warfare. The press, on the other hand, together with a large number of public men, clamoured for the relief of Cuba by force of arms.

At this crisis, on the 9th of February, an indis-

creet letter of the Spanish minister at Washington was intercepted and published. It reflected in sneering terms upon our Administration and our people. The minister resigned, and bitter recriminations flew across the Atlantic. It seemed that a single spark would start a conflagration. Then came the appalling news, on the morning of the sixteenth, that an American battleship, lying peacefully at her moorings in the harbour of the Spanish stronghold of Havana, had been destroyed by an explosion and two hundred and sixty-six American seamen killed.

The calamity was so sudden, so awful in its magnitude and the consequences that seemed inevitable, that the immediate result was contrary to all expectations. It startled the people from the careless levity, the empty bravado, with which they had cried for war. A few newspapers shrieked frantically for instant vengeance, but the great mass of the American people sternly set themselves to await the verdict of a legal commission which should determine the cause of the disaster.

Taking advantage of this portentous lull, the Government strained every nerve to prepare for conflict.

The ominous silence which fell on the land as the war-cloud grew more dense was broken by sounds of clanking iron, of thousands of whirling wheels, of heavy machinery working day and night to equip the half-completed ships and the coast batteries

from Key West to Eastport. Congress voted fifty million dollars for the national defence. Armories echoed to the tramp of armed men. Arsenals poured out a constant stream of heavy guns and ammunition, to be hurried away, North and South, to the waiting fortifications and turrets.

Throughout the land, three words met the eye on banners waving above crowded city streets, in scarlet letters at the head of great metropolitan journals, on the very stones and rustic fences along peaceful country roads; met the ear from the lips of school-boy and politician, from the concert-hall stage and the floor of Congress; words now flung out with a gibe and careless laugh, now muttered between set teeth—"Remember the 'Maine'!"

On the other side of the Atlantic the same scenes were repeated, but the nation was harassed by factions as well as by the prospect of war with a foreign foe. Almost penniless, hampered by the methods, traditions, and obsolete equipments of the past, rent by internal dissension, frenzied at the thought of losing their rich heirloom, the "Pearl of the Antilles," Spain feverishly manned her guns, called—as wildly and as vainly as did the despised *reconcentrados*—for the help which never came, and, like the rugged Anglo-Saxons across seas, waited for the first lightning flash which should proclaim the bursting of the storm.

CHAPTER II.

IN ANDALUSIA.

"Tengo mucha hambre!"

"Vaya! You eat too much, boy! You are like one of your pigs, there. When the sun sets you shall have food. *Vaya!"*

The boy looked wistfully toward the western hills that bordered the broad stretches of pasture-land along the Guadalquivir, and turned away from the black-browed man who had spoken, and who emphasised his command to "Go!" with a flourish of his staff.

Pedro Cueva was a swineherd. His father had once been a prosperous Andalusian farmer, but war-times, with their taxes, conscriptions, and seizures, had long ago robbed him of most of his earthly possessions. For years he had struggled against poverty and famine, until, allured by stories of wealth and prosperity beyond seas, he had made over what remained of his herds and olive orchards, together with the home his fathers had built cen-

turies before, to a younger brother, Carlos, and, taking his little daughter Isabella, had emigrated to Cuba. Pedro, then ten years old, he was forced to leave behind, but it was agreed that the son should join his father as soon as he could earn his passage-money to Santiago.

The boy remained with his uncle Carlos, and a hard life he had of it. From morning till night he watched the herd of black pigs, driving them to and from their sty, and living much of the time in a mud hut little better than theirs.

In the autumn the olives were harvested. The purple berries were beaten from the trees by peasant boys—of whom Pedro was one of the most nimble—clad in sheepskins and seated among the branches. Smaller children gathered the fruit from the ground into baskets, and loaded them upon donkeys, which the older girls drove to the nearest town with their burdens. There the olives were emptied into huge vats, crushed and pressed until the oil flowed out in clear streams and was poured into great earthen jars like those which Morgiana tapped upon in *The Forty Thieves*.

This was always a glad season for Pedro. The work was hard, but boys and girls were better company than pigs, and there was much shouting and laughter as the harvest was gathered. Besides, Don Carlos, as he was called (being now a landed pro-

prietor) allowed the children a few *reals* apiece for their labour, and Pedro hoarded his share of copper bits, like a miser, toward the sum which should some day take him to his father and dear Isa.

Seven long years had passed. Ill-fed, ill-clothed, not educated at all, save in the peculiarities of his grunting charges and in the best methods of picking and storing olives, the lad still toiled on the old farm, now much neglected by the owner, who preferred sunning himself, with a cigarette in his mouth, to working, and at such times fancied himself a fine gentleman. Seven years, and only three messages from Cuba, grudgingly read aloud to him by his uncle! The homeless Spaniard and his dark-eyed little daughter had found work among the mountains north of Santiago, and so secured a living and a humble cottage, where they waited for the boy who did not come. Their messages were always one and the same—"Come!" and the answer of Don Carlos was unchanging: "*Vaya!* Wait till you have earned the money!"

So Pedro waited, knowing nothing of the great life of the proud nation beyond the purple hills with their straggling groves of grey olive-trees; caring for nothing, hoping for nothing but his reunion with his father and Isa; until this bright afternoon when he had broken out—as he often had before, with the same result—"I am very hungry!"

His uncle's rough answer had hardly crossed his lips—he had hardly turned away to his grovelling herd—when the silence of the peaceful countryside was broken by the tramp of soldiers, the clank of arms, a harsh voice commanding “Halt!”

“That lad, there! He must come with us!”

“But why, then?” demanded Don Carlos, bewildered.

Pedro, with the instinct of a hunted creature, glanced swiftly around.

The soldiers saw the gesture, and one of them raised his musket threateningly.

“He is conscript. He must go to the war.”

“What war?”

“Pig! With the Cuban rebels, of course. Perhaps we should take you, too!”

“No, no,” returned Carlos hastily. “Come within and have some wine, Sir Officer.”

The soldiers closed around Pedro, and the whole company, including half a dozen other young fellows of the neighbourhood, bare-footed, ragged, dirty, and shock-headed like himself, shuffled up the hill to the thatched farmhouse.

Half an hour later they were on the march to the town, ten miles away, Pedro with his hand clenched over all his savings, which he had managed to extract from a hole in the wall, unseen by the rest. He made a careless movement and a coin rolled in the dust.

♣

"Halt! You are a thief, then! You shall be put in prison!"

In vain Pedro protested his innocence, as his hand was forced open and his small store of copper and silver—it might have amounted to six or seven dollars of our money—which he had been saving for years was wrenched from him.

"See," said the officer harshly, drawing him to one side, "I shall take this, and if you go to the *capitano* with your lies you will be thrown into a dungeon, never to escape. If you are a good child" (Pedro was taller than he by two inches) "it may be I can save you. Now, *como dice Usted?*"

"*Se lo dire*"—"I shall tell him," repeated Pedro, sulkily.

"What, pig, and go to prison?"

"Where shall I go if I am silent?"

"To Cuba, by the next ship. You will wear fine clothes, blue with a red stripe, and you will have a gay life, and——"

"*Que!* To Cuba?" asked Pedro, with a ray of hope.

"*Naturalmente.* Why not, then?"

"I will be silent," said Pedro.

"Forward, then, my children!" commanded the sergeant, well pleased.

At nightfall the troops were in the barracks at Andujar. The next morning they were shipped

by rail to Algeziras, upon the coast, and almost within the shadow of Gibraltar.

It was there that I saw Pedro, two months later, as, with a party of tourists, I halted a day near the great Rock, and, crossing the "Neutral Ground," visited the camp of the Spanish soldiery.

"Where are they going, these poor fellows?" I inquired of my guide.

"To Cuba, sir, this afternoon. See, they are in heavy marching order."

They seemed but mere boys, burdened with their knapsacks, canteens, cartridges, and arms.

"Who is that lad, guide,—the one with the dark eyes? He seems more hopeful than the rest." The guide asked a question in Spanish, and returned to my side.

"His name is Pedro Cueva. He is from the country, and hopes to find his father and sister in Cuba."

Pedro caught my eye, and smiled. Then he shouldered his Mauser rifle and fell into the ranks that were hastily forming at the long roll of the drum.

"Forward—march!"

"*A mas ver! A Dios!*" shouted a dozen voices. A grey-haired woman hid her face in a faded shawl. Two children clung to one of the men until they were drawn away, not roughly, by a bystander.

The drum and fife struck up a quick march, as

the boyish troop moved down the dusty street. They turned a corner, and were lost to sight.

The next day, as I stood on the deck of the *Fürst Bismarck*, surrounded by gaily dressed cabin passengers, on our way to Algiers, the First Officer paused in his rapid walk to point out a cloud of smoke, just visible through the Straits, on the western horizon.

"It is the Spanish transport-ship," he explained courteously to a pretty girl who questioned him. "She sailed this morning with troops—six hundred, I believe—for Cuba. Poor fellows! but few will ever come back."

"Why, are the insurgent forces so strong? I thought they were beaten, before we left New York."

The officer shrugged his shoulders and stroked his beard.

"What the insurgents spare the fever will take."

The pretty girl puckered up her eyebrows, gave a lingering and abstracted glance at the lessening cloud of smoke, settled herself comfortably in her easy-chair, and returned to the novel she had abandoned to "see what was the excitement."

As the *Bismarck* turned eastward with her freight of wealth and beauty and light hearts, the *Alfonso* steadily ploughed her way toward the Promised Land of the far Western sea.

So Pedro went to join his father and Isa.

CHAPTER III.

AT ANNAPOLIS AGAIN.

As the aspect of foreign affairs grew more threatening, the cadets at the Naval Academy became restless.

"I'll tell you, fellows," said a fourth-year man to a group of his classmates in his room one evening during recreation hours, "it's lucky we did n't bilge on those last exams. We're likely to have the chance of a lifetime, if war is declared——"

"And is n't finished before we graduate, Nat," drawled his chum, Bert Randall, tipping back his chair and resting his heels on the table. "I doubt whether Spain could hold up her fists more than three weeks."

"Poor old Spain!" observed a third; "it's all she can do to stand up in the ring, much less fight."

"Don't you believe it," exclaimed the first speaker, energetically. "There's lots of mischief in Madrid yet. When the Duke of Alva——"

"Oh, come off, Warren!" shouted two or three. "We get enough history under 'Spectacles,' with-

out having it thrown in as an extra." "Say," added Randall, "look at Stevens, there; is n't he just spoiling for a fight!"

There was a half-contemptuous laugh, as attention was directed to one of the group, a long, sallow-faced fellow, with a cringing demeanour and uneasy eyes. Martin Stevens stood high on the Academy lists, for he was undeniably a good scholar. But his classmates had "sized him up" long before now, and rated him at his worth as a man. In his plebe year he had been unmercifully "run," or hazed in small ways, and had only escaped worse punishment by his sneaking demeanour and cowardly concessions to the "youngsters," or members of the next higher class, who found him as unpleasant to persecute as a toad. "Toadying," indeed, was one of Stevens's characteristics, and that very trait had brought him to Randall's room this evening; the other fellows not condescending to order him out.

"I don't see why you fellows are all so anxious to fight," said he, as they looked his way. "For my part, I'd like a good fat berth in the Department at Washington. What's the odds, so long as you're paid well?"

"Oh, *you*!" ejaculated Warren, eyeing his disagreeable classmate scornfully; "you'll get a fat berth fast enough, while some of us are planking

the decks on a wet night, or standing up to a broadside of rapid-fires with half your pay!"

"Well, I guess I could fight as well as the rest of you," retorted Stevens, with some show of resentment. "Wait till there's a battle, and I'll show you the road to the enemy's deck."

A derisive laugh hailed this boast, and followed the butt of the ridicule, as he sneaked off to his room to put in a half-hour's extra study while the others were having their recreation.

"I wish I could get on to the *Portsmouth*," exclaimed Warren. "Dobson—our old quarter-back, you know—is on her, and Rexdale and Tickerson are ensigns. They got their commissions last June, and they were two of the best men in the class."

In the latter part of March, on the very day when President McKinley sent his message to Congress announcing the verdict of the Court of Inquiry on the *Maine* explosion, the Superintendent of the Academy, after conference with the Secretary of the Navy, announced that examinations would be held at once, and that on the following Monday all the members of the First Class who had shown themselves proficient should receive their diplomas more than two years ahead of time, and would probably be ordered at once to sea service on the various warships of the United States. The rapidly increasing navy, requiring a large number of new

officers, made this measure necessary—a repetition of affairs at the beginning of the Civil War in 1861.

The cadets were jubilant over the order. They would lose the delights of graduation week, the delicious moonlight nights under the elms, the admiring gaze of bright eyes, before which the graduating class were wont to manoeuvre in the various exhibition drills. No Board of Visitors would inspect their ranks and give them wise counsel; the diplomas would be handed to them in the most matter-of-fact manner, instead of by the august hand of the Secretary of the Navy. But these very omissions made the ceremony the more impressive. The cadets felt that they were dealt with as men, not boys; as defenders of the nation, rather than as rollicking students. That fourth of April was, indeed, to make a man of many a careless young fellow who had hitherto taken life but too lightly.

Through the kind efforts of the Commandant of Cadets, Randall and Warren, having successfully passed the examination, were assigned to the *Portsmouth*, and ordered to report on board immediately, at Key West. Stevens, it was soon after learned, had "retired from service."

The Message of the President to Congress, and through it to the people of the United States, was full of dignity and earnestness. That he felt the gravity of the situation was evident. The Court of

Inquiry, after three weeks of the most painstaking labour in hearing and sifting testimony as to the disaster in Havana harbour, had reported that in their opinion the explosion was caused by a submarine mine over which the ship was moored; and that they were unable to fix the blame upon any person or persons. The President added that he had laid the matter before the Spanish Government, and did not doubt that they would do all that was just and fitting in the premises.

As the days of April went by, the people grew more and more anxious and impatient. The reply of the Spanish Court proved evasive and unsatisfactory. The American Press, echoed by excited voices in the House and Senate, clamoured more loudly than ever for war.

The Navy Department meanwhile was not idle. Warlike preparations went on apace. Agents appeared in foreign ports, inspecting war vessels of every class, and numerous ships were quietly bought up, to serve as "auxiliaries."

Still more ominous were the measures taken nearer home. Hospital stores were gathered in large quantities, and, together with ammunition for the great turret guns and smaller arms, placed on board the warships. Sealed orders of mysterious import were despatched to every navy yard and station along the coast. A "Flying Squadron" was organised

and placed under command of Commodore Schley, whose name recalled the rescue of Greeley and his starving men at Cape Sabine, a dozen years before. His flagship was now the cruiser *Brooklyn*, and included in his command were the huge battleships *Massachusetts* and *Texas*.

Orders were sent to the formidable *Oregon*, and she started southward on her famous voyage from San Francisco around the Cape to the West Indies. Still another change. The Secretary dictated a brief message, and the next day there was no longer a navy

“Swimming like birds of calm along the unharmed shore,”

in the snow-white of peace. Every ship was painted a dull, sullen grey, the hue of battle-smoke, of lowering skies, of twilights which should cover stealthy movements in hostile waters.

At last the storm broke. Consul Lee had already been recalled from Havana. Minister Woodford was ordered to demand his passports in Madrid. The Spanish Minister left Washington. Messages flashed across the Atlantic, diplomatically worded, but carrying threat and defiance. The President called upon Congress for power to use army and navy to compel the evacuation of Cuba by her hereditary rulers, and on the 24th of April, 1898, war was declared between Spain and the United States of America.

CHAPTER IV.

THE YOUNG REPORTER.

About five years before our story opens, Fred Larkin, orphan, living on the charity of distant relatives in the town of Brookfield, made up his mind definitely to be a journalist. Ever since he was a little fellow, fishing in the Birch Log Brook with his pin hooks, he had been fascinated with the marvels of presswork. As he grew older he was allowed to help now and then in the office of the *Brookfield Farmer*, which was his ideal of all a newspaper should be. It was a proud moment for him when, at the age of twelve, he was seated on a high stool before a "case" of type, and with a "stick" in his hand, began to set up the latest production of the village poetess for one of the inside pages of the *Farmer*. From that day he had thrown himself heart and soul into the work; had served as compositor, reporter, pressman, and even as editor, during a week's absence of the regular manager of the paper. In his leisure moments he had published

a paper of his own for stamp collectors, called the *Standard Philatelist*, which imitated most of its esteemed contemporaries by inserting a large number of free ads, by printing a series of extremely valuable editorials and carefully selected clippings, and, finally, by failing at the end of its first twelvemonth.

Having graduated from the Brookfield High School, and entered upon his eighteenth year, Larkin, now a tall, lanky, overgrown fellow with an awkward gait, shy as a girl, but with fine dark eyes shining under his broad forehead, left his uncle's home, and with fifty dollars in his pocket went to the nearest large city to seek his fortune, having as capital, in addition to the cash aforesaid, a healthy body, a pure mind, and a strong, sweet Christian character—good investments for a young man, on which the dividends are sure to be large and steady.

During his first day in Boston he visited the offices of three large papers. In two of them he never got beyond the doorkeeper of the "chief's" office; in the third he was snapped up before he had reached the end of his opening sentence or had time to present his letter of recommendation from the *Brookfield Farmer*.

"All full. No country help wanted."

Larkin made a dignified exit, and, undaunted as Sir Galahad, marched across the street to the fourth and last of the big dailies.

This time he was admitted at once to the city editor's office, that gentleman being specially good-natured because of the publication in his paper that morning of a piece of important news in advance of every other daily in the city—in other words, a “scoop.”

So Fred was allowed to place his six feet of awkward young manhood in an office chair while Mr. Barnes, still keeping his scissors in hand, looked over his letter.

“H'm, pretty good word for you, my lad,” said he, briskly, after a penetrating glance at the applicant. “Are you dead in earnest? That 's the first thing we want in a *Bulletin* reporter!”

“Yes, sir,” said Larkin, simply, but with a firm closing of lips.

Both the brevity of the answer and the play of lips pleased the manager.

Just then the door opened and a young man entered hastily. Throwing down a bunch of yellow slips on the editor's desk, he would have retired at once, when he caught sight of Larkin, and, with a newspaper man's quickness, took in the purport of the letter lying open on the table. A scowl came over his face, then a sneer, as he looked the other from top to toe.

“New man, sir?” he asked, only half covering the contempt in his tones. Then dropping into the

only unoccupied chair in the room he began to whisper something to the editor, of which Larkin could only catch the words, "From the country—hayseed——"

"That 's enough. You can go ! " interrupted Mr. Barnes, sharply ; and the reporter sneaked out with a malignant glance at the applicant.

The editor then turned to the latter. " I 'll try you. Be on hand in the outer room at four this afternoon. There 'll probably be an assignment for you to-night. By the way," he added, his eye already beginning to travel over the columns of the exchanges before him, " don't mind Jim Oakley. He 's a crusty fellow, and a little cut up just now because I refused a friend of his a place on the paper. Keep clear of him. He 'll do his work all right. You do yours."

Larkin rose, and simply replying, " Thank you, sir ; I 'll do my best, and I 'll be ready at four," left the office.

Sure enough, an " assignment " was ready for him soon after the hour named, and it was eleven o'clock before he had returned to the office and had the satisfaction of sending in his report. To be sure, it had plainly been " blue-pencilled " to about one-half its original length when it appeared in the paper next day ; but he did not care for that. With what delight did he read his own sentences, mangled

as they were, in the columns of the great *Bulletin* with its hundred thousand circulation!

Not many days elapsed before he found his religious training severely put to the proof. The other "boys" in the office were not a bad lot, but they were reckless and fun-loving, and as soon as Fred's strict principles became known he was the butt of many a jocose remark. He was dubbed "Puritan," and perhaps the jesting would have gone no farther—for the country lad was quick in his repartees, and a good companion too—had not Oakley set on the rest, or the more turbulent among them, to torment the new-comer. Jim could not forgive him for taking the position he had been unable to secure for his own friend, nor for witnessing his discomfiture at the hands of the stern "City Ed."

In spite of opposition and enmity, however, Larkin steadily made his way onward and upward, until within three months from the day of his entrance he was known as one of the most tireless, fearless, tactful, and successful of the *Bulletin* staff.

"He never seems to know when he is beaten," remarked Mr. Barnes, confidentially, to one of his associates. "When I send him out I feel morally sure that he 'll have a 'story,' and a true one, on that subject before midnight. His principles come in awkwardly sometimes," he added, with a short

laugh. "Witness that Sunday variety concert I sent him to write up last week!"

"Did n't he do it well?"

"Would n't go! I had more than half a mind to discharge him on the spot, as he stood there in his quiet way. 'If you please, sir,' said his excellency, 'I don't believe in Sunday concerts—of that sort,' as if that settled it!"

"Well, it did settle it, it seems," laughed the co-editor, blowing a cloud of smoke from his cigar.

"Oh, yes, I could n't let the fellow go. He's too smart. I took it out of him that week, though!"

But Fred Larkin seemed to care little for "their taking it out of him."

Indeed, he throve under it, kept true to the path of honour, refused to join Jim and his set at the beer counter, did his work steadily, and won friends every day.

One stormy afternoon Mr. Barnes sent for him to come to his private office.

"I've a difficult and delicate job for you, Larkin," he said. "Prince Bornstein, whose plans for an American tour have made such a stir in this country, especially in New York circles, is on the *Cephalonia*, due here to-night. He chose this line instead of a New York boat on purpose to avoid publicity, a formal reception, etc. Now, I want

you to slip down the harbour somehow, get on board the steamer by hook or crook, and interview his Royal Highness. I don't believe another paper in the United States knows of his arrival, as he is travelling incog., and I only learned of his departure by the merest chance through a telegram from a personal friend. I want——"

Just then a gust of wind blew in at the open window. The office door slammed violently, and footsteps could be heard retreating down the corridor. The editor and reporter rushed to the door, but nobody was in sight.

"I'm sure I closed it when I came in, sir," said Fred, noticing the anxious look on his superior's face. "Probably one of the boys started to enter, and backed out when he saw you were busy."

"He must have come like a cat and opened the door without a sound," said Mr. Barnes. "I hope there's no traitor on the paper. This business is worth a thousand dollars to us, directly and indirectly, if it is well carried through. You'd better be off at once, Larkin. It's the most important job you've had, and I tell you plainly if you succeed it will be to your immediate advantage."

Fred bowed. "Shall I hire a tug, sir?"

"If necessary—or a Cunarder! *Get the news, that's all.*"

At nine o'clock that evening the young reporter

stood on one of the wharves in a drizzling rain. He had been unable thus far to secure a tug for his errand. He had been to three offices, and singularly enough every boat was engaged, stormy though it was.

There was no time to waste. Catching sight of a solitary boatman pulling a wherry, Larkin hailed him. The man lay on his oars and asked sulkily what was wanted.

"Come here and I 'll tell you. It 's worth your while."

The stern of the wherry floated up to the green, slimy steps of the old wharf, whereupon the oarsman was considerably astonished and angered at feeling a sudden jar through his clumsy craft, and seeing young Larkin calmly seated on the after thwart.

In another moment the reporter succeeded in reconciling the rower to his presence, and the wherry began to shoot silently down the harbour.

The rain fell heavily, and the night was pitchy dark. Mile after mile was covered by the little boat, neither passenger nor oarsman saying a word. Only at intervals the plashing of the oars and rattle of rowlocks ceased, and both men listened. The waves grew rougher as the outer harbour was reached and the swell of the deep sea was felt. Fortunately there was but little wind. Suddenly the rower spoke:

“ Hark! ”

A low, rumbling sound was heard in the darkness ahead.

“ Blowin’ off! ” said the boatman, excitedly, and he bent to his oars in good earnest. And now a huge form, long and black, loomed up through the gloom. Hoarse voices were heard on her decks. Then came a mighty roaring of iron links through a hawse-hole, a splash, more quick, sharp orders—and the *Cephalonia* was at anchor in the Lower Roads, waiting for the health officers to come off in the morning.

“ Pull softly,” said Fred, in low tones. “ Bring her up under the fore chains on the port side, out of the wind.”

He had no definite plan for getting on board, but believed he could manage it in some way, and was trying to pierce the darkness with his eyes when a great rushing came from the water just astern. Then a sharp cry of warning—a shout—was it Jim Oakley’s voice?—“ Look out there or we ’ll run you down! ”—the vision of a steam-tug close upon them—angry warnings from the deck of the *Cephalonia* were overheard, then a crash, a bubbling of water, and the intrepid young reporter’s senses failed him altogether.

When Fred Larkin came to himself, he found that he was lying in a stateroom on a bunk, with

two faces bending over him ; one was Jim Oakley's, the other, dark-moustached, kindly, but strange to him.

" Ah, Larkin, old fellow, you 'll be all right now!" cried Jim, wringing his hand. " We 'd have given you up if it had n't been for the Prince here. When he heard what you 'd risked your life for, he——"

But Fred was no longer listening. The moment the word " prince " was spoken it all came back to him. Struggling feebly to an upright position, he felt in the pockets of his coat (hanging over the foot of the bunk) for a pencil and a narrow blank book in a rubber case, and, looking up at the swarthy-faced gentleman, feebly asked :

" What are your Royal Highness's views on American institutions ?"

Well, all was explained presently. Jim was not a real traitor after all, nor had he tried to run down Fred's boat. He had only wished to " beat " his rival in the matter which he had accidentally overheard in the *Bulletin* office. He knew his move in engaging the tug and preventing others from going out would have been approved by the manager of the paper had he been on a legitimate assignment, and he trusted to his ultimate success and his infallible assurance to carry the scheme through with glory to himself and discredit to Larkin.

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Now, however, all this was forgotten, driven out by the accident which might have proved fatal had not the *Cephalonia's* men thrown over a life-preserver, and taken the rescued reporter on board, where the ship's surgeon did good service in resuscitating him. Oakley was heartily sorry for the attempt he had made, and frightened, too. But Fred was not the boy to tell tales. He was merely impatient of any further delay. The tug was summoned to the gangway, and soon was speeding back toward the twinkling lights of the city with both reporters on board. Next morning the *Bulletin's* two and a half columns on the arrival of Prince Bornstein, his plans, views, and other matters interesting to the eager, gossipy public were the despair of all the rival papers, who meekly copied the report *verbatim* for their evening editions. Nothing of the night voyage was told in the office, and Mr. Barnes, as usual, paid the bills and asked no questions.

This rather long digression from our story was necessary, that the character of the intrepid young reporter, who, like the naval cadets, was destined soon to be under fire, and who, on a certain day in April, was on his way to the Holmes house on Newbury Street.

Hallie, Norman Holmes's sister, wrote often to Rexdale, whom she was engaged to marry. The wedding was to have been in June, but it was now

plain that it would have to be postponed, as would also the marriage of her brother and Annie Rexdale, which it had been planned should take place in Boston at the same time.

The parting, which, however, had been foreseen before the young officers finally left Annapolis, was a sad one, no one knowing how long the separation was to be.

As soon as the war broke out, both girls were eager to offer their services as nurses, but they were told that only professionals were needed in the camp hospitals. If the conflict should be one of long duration, outside help might be called for; at present, women could only wait at home and pray for the safety of their loved ones on the battlefield or behind the guns of the warships.

One of the most frequent visitors at the house of Mrs. Holmes was Fred Larkin, the reporter on the *Daily Bulletin*. He was a cheery, good-natured fellow, as we have intimated, and a capital antidote for low spirits in those about him. On the evening of the day following the declaration of war he rang the bell at the Newbury Street house, and was shown up to the cosey sitting-room on the second floor.

"Good evening, Mrs. Holmes. Glad to see you, Miss Hallie. Thought I 'd call to receive your congratulations."

"What—are you——"

"Engaged? Well, not exactly!"

"Oh!" said Hallie, her dimple appearing for a moment. "But you seem very happy about something. Are you promoted to the editorship of the *Bulletin*, then?"

"Well, hardly—though I may have a *bullet in*, before long."

Mrs. Holmes's face and her daughter's became grave again.

"Don't joke about the war, Mr. Larkin. It's too real and terrible!"

"Oh, don't look at it that way," cried the reporter, "or you'll unfit me for duty. Fact is, I'm ordered to the front, to represent the paper."

"What! to report battles? Will you be in danger? How soon do you go?"

"Train leaves for New York at midnight," said Larkin, glancing at the clock on the mantel; "and I've got to do all my packing, besides taking in a dinner and a Christian Science meeting——"

"And us," added Hallie. "But you have n't told us where you're going, Mr. Larkin."

"Key West, first; and from there I must get out to Sampson's squadron somehow. Cuba and adjacent islands is quite an 'assignment,' is n't it? Wait till I get down there! You'll see Ensign Rexdale's name in letters an inch long in your next

morning's paper. I'm going to have him do something dazzling if I have to decoy him into a Spanish camp!"

"Don't be ridiculous," laughed Hallie, flushing a little. "I hope you'll keep yourself out of mischief, and Mr. Rexdale, too, if you have the chance. You know he and Mr. Tickerson were transferred to the *Eagle* two weeks ago."

"That so? *Eagle*—she was Gallatin's yacht *Almy*, was n't she?"

"I believe so, and——"

"Bought by the Government, and fitted out as an auxiliary gunboat—four officers and sixty men—battery of four 6-pounder Hotchkiss rapid-fires and two Colt automatics," repeated Larkin glibly. "Nice little boat. I must call on Rexdale, sure."

"Why, is there any possibility of your getting on a warship?" asked Hallie.

"That's just what I'm going to do, or know the reason why. No reporters on the ships, they say; but you can wager that ring on your finger, Miss Holmes, that there will be one, within six days. Which reminds me that I must be going. The Merchants' Club dine at eight, and Boston must have the 'story' to-morrow morning. Good-night," he added cheerfully, shaking hands again. "You'll hear from me before long. Any message to the ensign in blue, ma'am?"

If Hallie sent anything of the sort to the young naval officer, it was confided to her jolly friend at the front door, which presently closed behind him, the girl returning to her mother as his quick steps were heard down the street and, soon after, his boyish whistle to an electric car.

Mrs. Holmes, who, it will be remembered, had suffered from unexpectedly limited means during her son's course at the Academy, was now in easy circumstances. Miss Letitia Rexdale, Annie's aunt, had left her New Hampshire home, and was fairly installed as one of the Holmes household. Annie herself was a teacher in a suburban grammar-school, and spent every Saturday and Sunday with her friends in the city. Norman's pay while at sea, a little over a hundred dollars a month, enabled him to send home a part of his wages regularly, and every surplus dollar was carefully invested under the advice of a wealthy Chicago uncle, whose energy and practical business knowledge had already helped the family out of their financial difficulties.

When Fred Larkin arrived at Key West, he found that the squadron had already sailed. The despatch boat *Witch* had arrived, with news from the blockade, and was about to return. Its fireman (the boat was a small tug, such as ply in the harbours of the coast cities) had, however, absented himself without leave, and was discovered in a state of woful intoxi-

cation in a saloon, just before the *Witch* was to return to the ships. At this critical moment, the young reporter, who had asked fifty questions in half as many minutes, without disclosing his identity, appeared on the scene as a man in search of a job. Had fired, on harbour boats, and understood his business to the handle, he said; which was strictly true, for there were few positions which he had not temporarily filled, in or near Boston, during his five years' experience as the most enterprising reporter on the *Bulletin*.

Without further parley he was engaged, and a quarter of an hour later, stripped to the waist, was hurling coal into the fire-box of the *Witch*, as she ploughed the waters of the Gulf on her southern course. Before ten o'clock the next morning, he was—having accomplished the transfer in some way known only to reporters—on the deck of the *Eagle*, talking cheerfully with Rexdale and taking notes as the latter described the exciting departure of the ships from Key West the previous morning.

"Right over beyond that high bluff," Dave was saying, "is Matanzas. The Dons are throwing up earthworks all along the shore."

"They 'll make it lively for you, if they get their batteries mounted?" suggested Fred, with pencil poised reflectively, as he glanced toward the dim coast-line of Cuba.

"Rather! I don't see why the Admiral don't order some of us in, to stir 'em up a little. A few ten-inch shells is just the medicine those fellows need."

At that moment the young ensign's duties called him away, and Larkin shortly afterward disappeared. Early in the forenoon, a string of small flags fluttered from the signal halliards of the *New York*, followed by a vigorous "wigwagging" from the other ships. And right here a word on signalling at sea may not be out of place.

The "International Code" * provides for most of the talk with flags, even in war, though its main use is in peaceful maritime business. The code is based on the use of eighteen flags, of different shapes and colors, denoting the eighteen consonants, B, C, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, V, W. The flags are raised singly or in combination at the mainmast-head, and give to the receiver a certain letter or group of letters arbitrarily arranged. By common agreement between maritime governments, certain groups, or signals as they are best called, are made to indicate certain phrases the world over; and all the phrases needed by mariners, the character and number of which have been determined by ex-

* For this clear and concise explanation of the various modes of signalling at sea the author is indebted to an article recently published in *The Nickel*, called "Signals in War."

perience, are arranged in a code-book opposite the appropriate signals. Single letters indicate the most common and frequently recurring wants of a ship, two-letter signals the next degree of complexity, three-letter signals a wider range of information, and four-letter groups, the highest number so far used, complete the system.

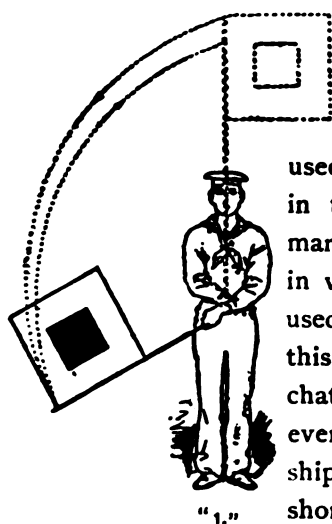
The code fills a good-sized volume, and each nation necessarily has its code in its own language; but with the code, sailors of any language found in the codes can communicate with sailors of any other nationality, whether understanding the language or not. There are 306 two-letter, 4896 three-letter, and 73,440 four-letter signals possible. For instance:

SIGNAL.	MESSAGE.
B C.....	Show your ensign.
B D.....	What ship is that?
N M.....	I am on fire.
H V R.....	What do you want?
F B W.....	I want a doctor.
G R L.....	Show your Greenwich mean time.
V T D.....	Yes.
V M D.....	No.
H V B.....	Assist.
H V C.....	Send immediate assistance.
H V F.....	Do you require assistance?
H V G.....	Do you require immediate assistance?
H V K.....	Can you assist?
H V Q.....	Will assist.
C P B Q.....	What is your longitude by chronometer?

Four-letter groups are used largely for the permanent names of things: from B, C, D, F to B, W, V, F, for example, for geographical names; G, Q, B, C to W, V, T, S for names of vessels (G, W, B, C to G, W, V, F for warships only) and C, B, D, F to F, W, V, T for the alphabet and a long series of syllables with which messages not found in the code can be made up. The system permits any method of indicating the letters, as of the use of globes, cubes, and pyramids in certain groups instead of flags, when, as in hazy weather



FIRST POSITION.



"1."

or on account of distance, it is feared the flags cannot be seen.

Semaphores are much used by English ships, both in the war and merchant marine, and coloured lights in various combinations are used at night. It is with this system that the ordinary chat of the sea is carried on everywhere, both between ships and between ship and shore in war or peace.

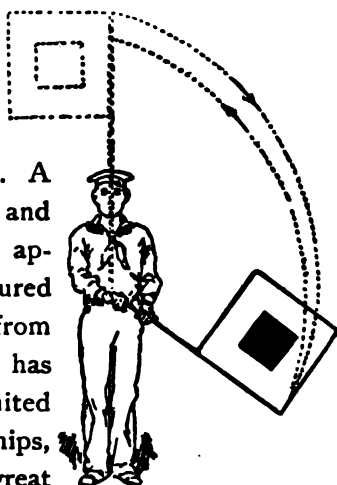
The needs of war, however, call for much more signalling than usual and in lines that no code could provide for. Then comes the wigwagger, who, after a good deal of practice, can talk in any lingo and at any length. Posting himself in some conspicuous place, he holds his flag straight upward till he sees another wigwagger on some distant and conspicuous place doing likewise. It is the agreed-upon indication that the other fellow knows he wants to signal and that he, the receiver, is ready. Then the signaller begins by waving his flag. Waving to the right, downward, in a plane perpendicular to the line of sight, denotes "one." A wave to the left, downward, denotes "two," and a wave from the first position (with the flag held straight upward) downward and back in the plane of sight, in front, denotes "three." With that simple system he gives the message, letter by letter. The alphabet is as follows:

A.....	22	K.....	2121
B.....	2112	L.....	221
C.....	121	M.....	1221
D.....	222	N.....	11
E.....	12	O.....	21
F.....	2221	P.....	1212
G.....	2211	Q.....	1211
H.....	122	R.....	211
I.....	1	S.....	212
J.....	1122	T.....	2

U.....1112	5.....1122
V.....1222	6.....2211
W.....1121	7.....1222
X.....2122	8.....2111
Y.....111	9.....1221
Z.....2222	0.....2112
tion.....1112	End of a word.....3
1.....1111	End of a sentence.....33
2.....2222	End of a message.....333
3.....1112	I understand.....22 22 3
4.....2221	
Use International code.....	I C U
Use Navy Telegraph Dictionary.....	T D U
Use Geographical (Navy) list.....	G L U

The method is perhaps apparent from the table, and two waves to the left indicate 22, which is A in the alphabet; one wave to the left, two to the right, and one to the left denote 2112 or B, and so on. A slight pause follows each letter. Numerals in the body of a message are spelled out in full, while a special signal gives notice that the numeral signals follow. The numerals are also used when each side has the service codes, while a number of combinations, such as are indicated at the foot of the table, abbreviate the routine work materially as well as provide for directions on the method, as "stop signalling," "wait a moment," "move a little to the right," "move a little to the left," "signal faster," "repeat last word," etc. If a bell should be used, the same applies, except that three rings may mean

"three." The heliograph, for flashing a ray from the sun, may also be used, making a long flash mean "three." A toot of a fog-whistle can be worked similarly. A torch is used at night, and recently a complicated appliance, involving coloured electric lights, worked from the deck by a keyboard, has come into use on the United States and English warships, and is found to be a great improvement.



"2."



"3."

In actual service, where the signals are almost sure to be seen by the enemy, the use of a cipher is necessary, and a very simple but effective device is used by both arms of the service in this country, though not exclusively.

In fact, the matter of ciphers is a large one and can only be alluded to here. One of them is illustrated on page 43, showing two circular disks of cardboard fixed together, one smaller than the other and turning on

a common centre. Around the edge of the larger disk the alphabet is printed from left to right and on the smaller disk from right to left. The disks are fixed in some position agreed upon beforehand, and the letters of the message found on one disk are signalled as the letter opposite. An example will illustrate the method better, the following message and the cipher being made up from the illustration :

Remember the *Maine*.
jwwozwj htw oasnw.

The above could be deciphered in time by the expert, even without the use of the cipher disks or



UNITED STATES ARMY CIPHER DISK.

knowledge of the combination, and to add to the complexity a key-word may be used, providing the position of "A" on, say, the inner disk, shall

change at certain periods, usually after every four letters. For example:

Reme mber theM aine.

c u b a

In this case, "Cuba" is the key-word. In the first four letters, "A" on one disk would be placed opposite "C" on the other; opposite "U" for the next four letters, and so on. It would be necessary to know the key-word to translate the despatch, very readily at least, though there is a system, based on the relative frequency of letters in ordinary language, by which the sense often can be determined by those who make a business of ciphers.

The officers and crews of the squadron did not have to wait long for an explanation of the signals on the flagship.

Scarcely three minutes after the first appearance of the flags the boatswain's shrill whistle sounded through the ships,—

"All hands—Clear for action!"

CHAPTER V.

OFF MATANZAS.

To Dave's great disappointment the little *Eagle* was not destined to take part in the bombardment of Matanzas. She was ordered to join the *Marblehead* and *Nashville* and proceed at once to Cienfuegos, on the south coast of Cuba, with the special purpose of intercepting two large Spanish armed transports, the *Montserrat* and *Alicante*.

Larkin, on the other hand, deemed it best to remain with the squadron near Matanzas. Indeed he was ordered off the *Eagle* as soon as his presence was reported to her commander, Lieutenant Southerland, who was a strict disciplinarian and was determined to allow no newspaper men on board.

Fred touched his cap good-naturedly as he went over the side and was rowed back to the *Witch*, which hovered about in the rear of the warships. In this way he obtained a good view of the action, a full account of which he telegraphed to the *Bulletin*.

The cruiser *New York*, meanwhile, was the scene of the utmost activity. The moment the order "Clear for action!" was given, the deck swarmed with men, each proceeding to his post and executing certain prescribed duties with marvellous precision and rapidity.

Down came the polished brass railings in a trice, together with the canopy frames over the hatchways. Battle-plates of steel were fastened over the open ways in the rear of the heavy guns. Ventilators were torn up as if by the roots and hurried below, while their deck holes were covered with metal disks. Great anchor-cranes were turned down out of the way of the enemy's shot. Anchors were freed from their cables, and the chains which had not already been stowed below were wrapped for protection about the unarmoured parts. Boat davits were hastily detached and stowed. All awnings were soaked with water and either placed safely below to guard the ammunition from splinters and sparks, or swathed about such of the boats as were not filled with water and set adrift.

Overboard went turpentine and other inflammable stores. All chests, furniture, and other movable woodwork calculated to shed splinters and cause injury were sent below, as well as compasses, chronometers, and other delicate instruments of navigation.

The public funds were placed in such shape that

they might be easily removed or destroyed. All needless steam supply was cut off above the protective deck, to prevent scalding in case of accident. Hose was coupled to fire-mains, while the throbbing of the pumps told that they were ready for instant use.

While a hundred men were busy at these tasks in the open air, others below decks adjusted war heads to the torpedoes and placed these deadly missiles in their tubes.

Men stationed themselves by the magazines, ready to pass ammunition to the hoisting apparatus which connected with the turrets and deck. Down in the sick-bay the surgeons made ready their instruments and dressings, and saw that cots were prepared for the wounded. Finally, the signal-books of the ship—those unknown to the marine of other nations—were placed in weighted covers, to be cast overboard if necessary. Just one hour and three-quarters had elapsed since the order to "clear ship" was given.

The crew were now piped to mess, and ate hungrily after their exertions. Hardly had they taken a dozen whiffs at their pipes, after the meal, when the sharp roll of the drum was heard, beating to quarters, and the men hastened to their stations, most of them stripped to the waist.

The chaplain went about among them, quietly taking messages, and sometimes little packages,

from one and another of the crew, to be forwarded to loved ones at home "in case anything should happen," and exchanging cheery words with them.

And now the captain, with the delivery of the last report of readiness, steps into the conning-tower, behind its sheltering folds of steel, and quietly reads from the telltale dials on its rounded walls the messages that come up to him from every part of the great warship. "*Ahead—half-speed!*"

Cheer on cheer from the crews of the ships that have not been called upon, as the *New York* sullenly draws toward the shore, followed by the *Cincinnati* and *Puritan*.

"FULL SPEED!"

Onward, faster and faster, move the ships. The gun crews wait, with bared arms and naked feet, around the steel monsters that thrust their muzzles far out from the turrets. Up on the bridges the men at the range-finders keep them bearing on the shore, and down in the conning-tower, the turrets, and before the principal gun-stations the dials register the rapidly decreasing distance to the sandbanks where the Spanish batteries are supposed to be waiting for them.

Larkin's account of the bombardment was as follows:

"There was a puff from a masked battery on the east shore, followed an instant later by the sharp

report of an 8-inch gun. The *New York* returned the fire even before the report could be heard, and the shell struck near what looked like a streak of yellow paint against the dark green.

"Glasses showed the yellow streak to be a Spanish battery, on which work was being hastened.

"Admiral Sampson's object in opening fire at once became clear. It was directed at a new battery being hastily constructed by the Spanish engineers on the west side of the bay. This work must be stopped. With our marine glasses soldiers could be seen to desert the battery hastily and retire around the bend toward the bay. But that there were other shore batteries quickly developed.

"From another yellow streak, down near the water's edge on the east side of the bay, came a tiny puff of white smoke, then the scream of a shrapnel shell. It flew wide of its mark, however, only making a big splash one hundred yards from the *New York*.

"The fire of this battery was returned, and the first battle was on. Guns began to boom rapidly. For some time the *New York* used only her smaller pieces, but pretty soon the heavy boom of her big guns amidships reverberated among the hills.

"After the firing had continued for about sixteen minutes the *Puritan* was signalled to get into the game. She took a position on the port side of the

New York, and about a mile and a half from the east-shore batteries. There she promptly drew the fire of the first two batteries on the west shore.

"At first the *Puritan* used only her secondary battery to get the range of the enemy, who were almost invisible, their locality being indicated, however, by the smoke. By this time the firing was quite rapid from both the *New York* and *Puritan*. The flagship lay so that she presented a broadside to both shores, and she used her guns, after a few range-finding shots, with excellent results. The accuracy of her gunners was continually attested by clouds of sand and mortar which flew around the shore batteries. The Spaniards replied steadily but with no effect.

"Meanwhile, the *Cincinnati* was impatient to take a hand. Finally Captain Chester received permission to bring his ship into action. He adroitly chose a position less than two thousand yards from the west-shore batteries, and it was soon clear that, while exposed fully to his fire, they could not train their guns on the cruiser.

"Until the end of the engagement the *Cincinnati* maintained an effective fire on the Point Maya, where were located the east-shore batteries.

"This combined and destructive fire soon gave the men on shore enough. In less than twenty minutes from the time they opened on the *New*

York their fire had been silenced. When this was apparent Admiral Sampson gave the signal to withdraw.

"The *Puritan*, being the most ungainly of the three ships, was the last to fire. This prompted a Spanish gunner to let go another shot at the big monitor. He probably regretted his action. The *Puritan* replied with one of the 12-inch guns in her forward turret. I had my glasses full on the battery when the enormous shell struck it. The explosion was terrific. A white column of sand and mortar was thrown fully fifty feet in the air, like a jet from some terrestrial geyser. Tons and tons of earth must have been in that column, and what it did to the Spanish can only be imagined, as the distance was too great to observe the details with certainty. It was a magnificent shot, especially as the rough sea was washing continually over the deck of the *Puritan*, and it ended the battle.

"The three ships then steamed majestically out of the bay, having taught the foe a severe but salutary lesson."

The warships once more resumed their positions on the blockade. The men of the *Eagle* still wore long faces, but their opportunity was soon to come. Before describing the exciting events that followed close upon the bombardment of Matanzas, we must turn our eyes to the other side of the globe.

CHAPTER VI.

ACROSS THE CHINA SEA.

One pleasant evening in the last week of April a party of American naval officers were seated in the coffee-room of an English club-house in Hong-Kong. They were guests of the surgeon of the English man-of-war *Britannia*, then at that port and lying side by side with the *Baltimore*, *Raleigh*, and others of our Asiatic Squadron. The party were enjoying their coffee and cigars, while they discussed the warlike aspect of affairs between Spain and the United States.

"I tell you," said a junior lieutenant from the English warship, bringing his fist down on the table so that the cups danced, "there 'll be no war,—that is, of any account."

"I 'm not so sure," said Assistant-Engineer Holmes, of the *Olympia*. "Spain has lots of pride, and won't back down till she has to. Besides, they have a notion—I 'm not so sure but they share it with some of your people, Lieutenant!—that the

American navy is only a fleet of wherries which the *Pelayo*, *Viscaya*, and the rest could sink in five minutes. I won't say anything about the *Britannia*!"

The Englishman smiled languidly and stroked his moustache.

"For my part," put in a Yankee ensign, puffing at a big Manila cigar, "I hope we won't have to fight. I'm an awful coward, and the thought of a ten-inch aimed my way makes me homesick."

"I'll risk you, Sandy," laughed Holmes, clapping his old friend on the shoulder. "I believe you'd engage the whole Spanish navy in the *Olympia's* gig, if you got the chance!"

"Mark my words," said Lieutenant Brace, the first speaker, "your ships will stay right here in the harbour till——"

"An orderly at the door, sir," whispered one of the waiters in Ensign Saunders's ear.

Sandy sprang to his feet and hurried out to the marine, who saluted stiffly and gave his message.

Back came the ensign, his eyes dancing very unlike those of a man who preferred ease to action.

"All officers on board at once," he announced in energetic tones. "Come on, Lat. Our side-arms are in the coat-room. Good-night, gentlemen! Thanks for a jolly evening! Lieutenant, just work the old *Britannia* out to a reserved seat not a hun-

dred miles from Manila if you want to see some fun about next Sunday or Monday!"

The company hastily broke up, and the Americans hurried down to the wharves, where their boat's crew were awaiting them.

"Let fall—give way!" and the water boiled before the bows of the little craft, under the powerful strokes of the man-of-war's men. In ten minutes they were beside the *Olympia*, and in five more every man was on deck and the boat hanging from the davits. Before they slept every man in the squadron—so quickly does news at sea fly along decks and through wardrooms—knew that sailing orders had been received; and although no official news of a declaration of war had reached even the Commodore, it was said everywhere that a battle was close at hand.

Sure enough, "Up anchor!" came at noon of the next day, and one by one the great ships moved out of the harbour. Ringing cheers came from the English ship, as the *Olympia* steamed slowly past her, and were answered heartily by the American crew.

There was a halt at Mirs Bay, about forty miles from Hong-Kong.

"What are we bringing up here for?" exclaimed a cadet in deep disgust, as he heard the rattle of the anchor-chains.

"The British consul ordered us away from Hong-Kong, they say," returned Saunders, who, like the other, was busy at the mess-table.

"Why don't we strike right across for Manila, then? Is the old man afraid?"

"Don't you worry about Dewey, Calkins," said the ensign, working away vigorously at a piece of beef. "When the Commodore's afraid, bananas will grow at the North Pole. He knows what he's about."

Calkins subsided before Saunders's sagacious comments, but his berth-mate, Rod Whitney, took up the conversation.

"What are the defences of Manila, anyway?"

"Old-fashioned, except some good Krupp guns at Corregidor and in the harbour," returned Holmes, from the opposite side of the table.

"Any mines?"

"Nobody knows, I guess. But Dewey won't stop to find out. That is n't his way."

"Well, I don't want to be blown up, like those fellows in the *Maine*. I should think they'd send launches ahead to explore the bay before we go in," grumbled Cadet Whitney, shaking his head.

"Call the orderly in and send up a note to the old man," laughed Saunders. "He never thought of the torpedoes. It's advice *he*'s looking for, especially from a cadet. I wonder he has n't sent for you before, Whit!"

The young officers were not destined to a severe trial of their patience, after all. Early in the forenoon of April 27th, obeying a signal from the *Olympia*, "All ships prepare to leave anchorage at two P.M.," steam was got up, anchor-cables brought "up and down," and every preparation made for the start.

Promptly to the minute the squadron was under way, the *Olympia* leading, with her band playing the *Capitan* march, and the rest following in two parallel columns—the *Baltimore*, *Raleigh*, *Petrel*, *Concord*, and *Boston*. Half a mile distant, and abreast of the others, was the little *McCulloch*, convoying the heavily laden coalers, *Nanshan* and *Zafiro*.

The voyage was a short one, and just before Holmes went below at eight bells to stand his watch in the engine-room, on the morning of the 29th, he had a glimpse of the beautiful shores of Luzon, near Subig Bay.

All day long the ships crept along the coast, which was everywhere clothed with palms, mango-trees, and the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics. It was like a tourist excursion, and as the young engineer, coming up to enjoy the fresh air after the heat of the room where he had been stationed, leaned against the forward turret beside his old friend Saunders, he could hardly believe the lovely

scene was so soon to be shadowed with the smoke of battle.

"Don't get sentimental, Lat," laughed the ensign, clapping him on the shoulder. "You can make your affidavit that there 's as much misery to the square mile over in that smiling landscape as there is anywhere on the globe. I 've read about it and I know. Here 's the Doctor," as a cadet sauntered up and saluted. "Ask him, if you don't believe it."

Hugh Liddon, who was known to his academy friends and shipmates as "Doctor," had spent a year or two in preparation for the medical profession before he suddenly made up his mind to a naval career. He had a wide and varied smattering of botanical and medical knowledge, and knew the Philippines, "ethnologically, treeologically, and universilogically," as the other cadets were wont to say.

"What do you want now?" asked Liddon, calmly adjusting his glasses (he was somewhat near-sighted) and glancing over toward the distant shore.

"Oh, Holmes is weeping a few tears over the prospect of disturbing the peace of the Spanish real estate over there," said Sandy, with a sweep of his hand.

"Peace!" exclaimed Liddon. "Well, I should smile! They don't know what peace means in the Philippines."

"Of course I know about the insurgents," began Holmes.

"Oh, I don't mean the present rebellion, though that's been lively enough for the last two years to let people know the sound of musket fire. The Dons have kept these fellows fighting ever since Magellan discovered the islands in 1521. *He* was killed in a scrap, and they 've kept it up ever since."

"Why, how so, Doc?"

Liddon leaned back against the turret, and prepared to hold forth on his favorite topic.

"Magellan—who, by the way, was not a Spaniard at all, but only an ex-Portugee, naturalised at Madrid—discovered the group in 1521, and, as I said, was killed by the natives a few weeks afterward. Pretty soon the natives gave a grand feast, and seized the occasion to put out of action twenty-seven more of their visitors."

"Killed them?"

"Cert. In the Philippines they never do things by halves, not if they can help it. Well, the Spanish, who had come in three ships which were now left undermanned, burned one of them, cruised about a bit in the other two, and finally returned home by way of the Cape of Good Hope, completing the first circumnavigation——"

"Hold on! Hold on!" shouted Sandy, "I want to write that word down and paste it in my hat. If

I did n't have cartridges handy I could fire it at a Don and bring him down at a hundred yards. 'Circum—nav'— All right, go ahead, Doctor!"

"—of the globe," continued Liddon, who was used to his shipmate's jokes. "Two or three more expeditions were fathered by Charles V., but the real possession of the islands did n't materialise till Philip II. got his hand in, and had them named for him. From that time on, the Spaniards have amused themselves by capturing and holding various points on the thousand or more islands of the group, replacing garrisons as fast as they are butchered by the natives or die of fever, and keeping the said natives on the jump to pay the expenses of the job, and a little over."

"Why, do you mean to say the Spaniards don't hold the whole business now?" inquired Holmes, to whom this view of the situation was entirely new.

"I do mean to say just that," returned Hugh, taking off his glasses and wiping them carefully before replacing them on his nose. "There are thousands of square miles where a Spaniard would be shot or poisoned or *baronged* at sight, if he showed his head."

"What in the name of curdling mystery is '*baronged*'?" asked Sandy, his knees knocking together.

"If you ever go ashore in Mindoro or Palangay, you 'll find out," said Liddon. "The *barong* is a

cheerful sort of sword, something like a butcher's knife, with an oval-shaped blade, a thick back, and a thin razor-edge. It 's the revolting islanders' pet weapon, and travellers say the way they slice off a head or an arm with it is a fine art in itself."

" Oh, give us a rest, Doc, and go on with your lecture," exclaimed the two other cadets who had joined his audience. " Don't be so realistic with your *barong*, but tell us about the history of the islands."

" Well, the Spaniards did n't go in much for civilising the ' Filipinos,' but began at once to work them for cash. Pretty soon a Chinaman with the same views of thrift happened along with a pirate fleet of sixty-odd junks and several thousand men. He tried to take Manila, but the Dons fought the ship well and drove him off to another port. The Spaniards had no idea of dividing spoils, and finally sent him off for good. The next customers to deal with were the Netherlanders, with whom Spain had an unpleasantness at home of long standing. They managed to conquer them——"

" They did beat the Dutch!" murmured Sandy.

" And were left for a while to attend to their own little domestic affairs, such as massacring a few thousand Chinese in and about the capital. Then trouble arose between England and Spain."

" Oh, the war of 1761?" put in Calkins.

“ Right, my brother mariner. The British took Havana, and a fleet was sent hitherward. The Spanish garrison, with five thousand native recruits, did their best to defend the place. ‘ The coloured troops fought nobly,’ but of course the English had their way in the end. The city was pillaged for two days by the Sepoys, some two thousand of whom supported the invaders; which fact is no credit to General Draper, who commanded the English troop. A big indemnity was demanded from the Spanish, and the conquerors tried to bring order out of confusion, but before the English were done fighting—for the other fellows did n’t seem to know when they were licked—peace was declared at home and the Anglo-Saxons withdrew with empty pockets.

“ Besides these foreign troubles the Philippines have been treated to several lively rebellions, one in 1629 being extremely interesting for all concerned. This, I believe, was started by a sort of ‘ draft riot,’ like the one in New York. Thirty years later the natives revolted again, chose a king, and put forty thousand troops in the field. But the Spaniards won, all the same.

“ In 1744, 1823, 1827, and 1844 there were powerful uprisings, which were crushed in the prompt and effective Spanish way. All of which goes to show that life under the red-and-yellow banner is no picnic for the Filipinos.

"Twenty-five years ago there was another big rebellion planned, but it fell through at the outset. Then in 1896 came the outbreak which is still, so to speak, breaking out."

"What was the matter this time?"

"Oh, the old story—compulsory military service, heavy taxes, oppressions by the Church, and miserable management generally. I read in a book the other day that the Spaniards have an amiable way of collecting taxes, when a subject is stubborn or poor. They seize him and beat him till he pays or dies.

"Meanwhile, to conclude my remarks, a large part of the islands are *always* in revolt, as I have said. In these places Spanish authority is a mere farce, even along the coast where a gunboat can bring up occasionally and pump lead into the village; while in the interior of Luzon itself, as well as the other large islands, there are vast tracts where the name of Spaniard is not known, and where the foot of the white man has never trodden. Thanking you for your kind attention, I will now withdraw."

Loud applause greeted the cadet's low bow, and talk and laughter ran high until it was checked by the executive officer.

All this time the squadron was moving nearer and nearer the bay of Manila, which was to be the scene of to-morrow's battle.

The afternoon passed slowly away, and the flags came down. Men gathered in groups, forward, and smoked their pipes with short, nervous puffs. Officers talked of nothing but the meeting with the Spaniards and the probable results of the conflict.

So, over the tropical islands with their forests and hills, and their countless thousands of ignorant, childish, human souls ; over the Spanish fortress and fleet where men waited with clenched hands and shotted guns for the first sign of the hostile armada ; over the broad, restless sea and over the leaden-hued ships steadily advancing to their goal, the great, peaceful, comforting night closed in and soothed its children to sleep.

CHAPTER VII.

THE "MAINE" IS REMEMBERED.

At half-past eleven that night the men were roused from their sleep as noiselessly as possible, and hastened to quarters, staggering and rubbing their eyes open. Dewey had explored Subig Bay by daylight, and had found that the Spanish Admiral, notified by cable from Hong-Kong of the departure of the American Squadron, had left the bay and taken shelter under the batteries of the strong fortress at Manila, where several fine guns of modern make and heavy calibre were mounted.

Montejo knew the weakness of his own fleet, and had shrewdly avoided a battle in the open sea. The chances of victory were strongly against him, he realised, in any case.

"I still held a hope," he afterward wrote, "that the Americans would not go to Subig, and would give us time for more preparations; but the following day I received from the Spanish consul at Hong-

Kong a telegram which said: ' Enemy's squadron sailed at 2 P.M. from the bay of Mirs, and according to reliable accounts they sailed for Subig to destroy our squadron, and then will go to Manila.'

" This telegram demonstrated that the enemy knew where they could find my squadron, and that the port of Subig had no defences. The same day, the 28th of April, a council of the captain and all with the exception of Del Rio, chief of the new arsenal, thought that the situation was insupportable, and that we should go to the bay of Manila in order to accept there the battle, under more favourable conditions."

" I refused to have our ships near the city of Manila," the doughty Spanish Admiral continues in his official report, " because, far from defending it, this would provoke the enemy to bombard the Plaza, which, doubtless, would have been demolished, on account of its few defences. It was unanimously decided that we should take position in the bay of Cana Coa in the least water possible, in order to combine our fire with the batteries of Point Sangley and Ulloa.

" I immediately ordered Del Rio to concentrate his forces in the most strategic part of the arsenal, taking every precaution to burn the coal and stores before allowing them to fall into the power of the enemy. I sent the *Don Juan de Austria* to Manila

to get a large number of lighters, filled with sand, to defend the water-line of the *Castilla* (which could not move) against the enemy's shells and torpedoes. At 10 A.M. on the 29th I left Subig with the vessels of my squadron, towing the *Castilla* by the transport *Manila*.

" In the afternoon of the same day we anchored in the gulf of Cana Coa in eight metres of water. On the following morning we anchored in line of battle with the *Cristina*, *Castilla*, *Don Juan de Austria*, *Don Juan de Ulloa*, *Luzon*, *Cuba*, and *Marques del Duero*.

" The force of the United States warships, excepting transports that were non-combatant, amounted to 21,000 tons, 49,290 horse-power, 163 guns (many of which were rapid-fire), 1750 men in their crews, and had an average velocity of about 17 miles. The power of our only five effective ships for battle was represented by 10,111 tons, 11,200 horse-power, 76 guns (very short of rapid-fire), 1875 crew and maximum speed of 12 miles."

Whatever might be said of the cause in which they were arrayed, it cannot be denied that the Spanish sailors were brave men, entering calmly upon a contest with a foe of nearly double their own weight, not to mention the vastly superior equipment and training of the Americans. The sequel proved that the blood of the old hidalgos

still flowed in the veins of these gallant man-of-war's men, defending a vain hope at the end of the nineteenth century.

" Good-by, Holmes! " called Saunders, as the former left his cabin and ran to the head of the ladder leading down into the bowels of the ship. " Keep your old tea-kettle going and we 'll do the rest! "

" Good-by, Sandy! Hope we 'll come out of the scrimmage all right! " And down he went to the engine-room.

The ensigns and cadets hurried to their stations. Saunders was in command of the gun-crews in the forward turret, Cadet Liddon being under him.

" Good for you, Doc! " he said in low tones, as he found the cadet there before him. " Give those specs a good wipe, will you? "

" They 're cleared for action, sir, " yawned the subordinate.

" Set 'em up! " called out one of the gun-crew excitedly, as he patted the breech of the huge rifle and peered out into the darkness.

" Silence! " said Saunders, sternly. " Don't talk above your breath. "

" Mum 's the word, sir! " whispered the gun-captain. " Keep your tongues still, men! You 'll have noise enough before another midnight! "

Down below the stir was no less marked than on

deck. The *Olympia's* auxiliary boiler, not before in use, was coupled up, fires started, and the steam in the gauges began to mount. The whole force of engineers and firemen stood by, the extra hands ready for service. Coal-passers and trimmers, stripped to the waist, dashed into the bunkers, and baskets of coal came flying out toward the furnaces.

Meanwhile Captain Gridley gave the senior-watch officer the keys of the magazines. These were opened, electric lights turned on, and the carriages and travellers that lifted the powder-cans and shells to the ammunition hoists were tried, to see that they were in proper working order.

And now a great silence fell over the ships. Not a light was to be seen, save one hooded lantern on the stern of each vessel to guide the one immediately behind. From the bridge Commodore Dewey, with two or three officers, eagerly scanned the waters ahead and turned now and then to give a low order. He knew that at any moment his ship might be blown to atoms by a hidden torpedo, and sink like the *Maine*, carrying down its hundreds of living, wounded, shattered men. The lives of all these, as well as the fate of the whole squadron and the prestige of the United States Navy, were in his hands.

Onward crept the fleet, in darkness and silence, save the dash of the waves against their steel prows.

The stars overhead looked down calmly on the advancing ships, the tossing waters, and the slumbering land.

Mile after mile was measured off, at four-knot speed, and Corregidor, the strongly fortified island at the mouth of the bay of Manila, was close at hand. The crews, standing at their guns, inside the turrets and out; the marines belted and armed, the officers with their glasses trained on the flagship and the sea, the engineers and firemen in the hot, oil-scented depths of the vessels, grew nervous with the tension.

But now a low order passed to every station on board the *Olympia*. It was repeated by Saunders in his turret:

"Cast loose and provide!"

Instantly all was stir and activity once more along the deck. Sandy's crew, with the rest, sprang gladly to their work. The heavy steel clamps which held the huge breech-loaders were loosened. There were six men in each gun-crew, headed by No. 1, the gun-captain; the others being expected to succeed to the captaincy in order, as fast as the captain drops, when the ship is in action.

After they have cast loose, one man connects the electric smoke-fan, and starts it going, for the smoke cannot be allowed to interfere with the work of the crew after the fight begins. The hydraulic loading-

rammer is tested to make sure it will work, and the electric firing-wire, primers, and firing apparatus are also made ready. No. 2 gets the hose and sponges ready for washing out the big rifle after the fire; No. 3 turns on the lights and fills the gun-tub with fresh water; No. 4 tests the ammunition hoist; No. 5 tries the gun's working motive power, and No. 6 makes sure that the training gear is in order and working. The gunner's mate has provided a toolbox and a number of other accessories. Everything is ready, and Saunders's next command for the men in the big turret is "Open breech!"

Nos. 2 and 3 respond, and move the breech-plug back and out of the way.

"Sponge!" comes the next order, and No. 1 turns on the hose; No. 2 washes out the shell space of the gun with the aid of No. 5; No. 3 cleans the face of the breech-plug, and then with No. 2 places the loading tray, which guides the shell and powder charges from the carriages of the ammunition hoist to the gun. At the same time the men below in the magazines have supplied the ammunition to the hoist, and at the order "Up lift!" No. 4 works the lever, and the ammunition hoist comes up behind the gun. The gun has already been run to the loading position and is ready.

At the order "Load shell!" No. 1 extends the hydraulic rammer and pushes the projectile home.

"Place first cartridge!" is the command, and No. 4 drops the hoist down until the first of the two powder cartridges is opposite the gun-breech.

"Load first cartridge!" rings out, and No. 1 extends the hydraulic rammer again and the powder charge that is to drive the huge projectile is rammed home in the chamber of the mammoth rifle.

Just as the loading of the pieces was completed with beautiful precision and promptness, there was a distant flash of light away off on the starboard bow, followed a quarter of a minute later by a dull, muffled boom.

"Corregidor has opened on us," observed Sandy, calmly. "Marline, train your starboard gun where you saw the flash."

The gun-pointer silently obeyed the order, and the muzzle of the great rifle moved slightly upward and to the right, the range-finders on the bridge having almost instantly telegraphed down the distance.

Another flash, and this time, after the report of the gun, a mighty splash within a hundred yards of the ship.

"They 've got our range, sir," said the gun-captain; and he patted the breech of the rifle significantly.

The *Olympia*, however, was not yet to announce her presence to the enemy. The squadron was in

reality well past Corregidor, and the shore fire came from a battery on a small isolated headland opposite the fort, known as El Fraile. The *Raleigh* was the first to answer, followed by one shot from the *Concord*; but it was the *Boston* which put a quietus on this astonishingly daring attack. She ran in close to the shore, trained her guns upon the battery, and sent in shell after shell until the shore was once more silent. Then Captain Wildes hurried after the column and brought his ship into line again.

Rockets from Corregidor had already warned Manila of the approach of the Americans, and the latter proceeded slowly up the bay to seek the Spanish ships which Commodore Dewey was ordered by the Department at Washington to "capture or destroy" at all hazards. The men flung themselves down on the decks beside their guns and caught an hour or two of sleep, only to be called at daybreak for the terrible duties before them. Hot coffee and biscuit were served out, together with a small ration of cold meat, no fires being allowed in the galleys, and the crews were ready for action.

Meanwhile, the feeling on board the Spanish fleet was one of intense anxiety. Knowing themselves to be immensely outclassed by the American ships both in tonnage and armament, the Spaniards could only look forward to almost certain defeat. Nevertheless, they determined to make a brave fight of it

and die at their posts. The vessels were stripped for action, anchors buoyed and cables made ready to slip at an instant's notice.

At a little before five o'clock the faint dawn showed a column of dark masses slowly approaching from the sea. It was the United States Squadron, silent, formidable, sure of victory.

The batteries on the point opened fire, but there was no reply from the advancing column. It was not to be diverted from its aim,—the flotilla huddled together at the head of the bay, under the protecting bastions of Cavite and the guns of Manila.

Nearer and nearer. A shot from the city batteries, as futile as the missile from a boy's pea-shooter. Then a string of flags mounted to the peak on the *Reina Cristina*, and at the signal the broadsides of the Spanish ships burst forth in a fierce crash, which was drowned by the answering thunder from the attacking fleet.

On the bridge of the *Olympia*, at the head of that terrible column of destroyers, stood Commodore Dewey, calmly scrutinising the enemy's fleet and batteries through his marine glasses, while the solid shot and shell screamed through the air and tore up the water on all sides. Captain Gridley, commanding the flagship, was induced to remain in the conning-tower, lest every executive officer should be killed.

Five times the attacking squadron moved slowly across the front of the Spanish line of ships and forts, the *McCulloch* (despatch boat) and the two colliers being left at a safe distance down the bay, where they awaited with intense anxiety the result of the terrific cannonade whose uproar filled all the air, and whose smoke drifted in huge clouds across the water, obscuring the combatants and the city itself.

At one time a couple of small craft, hardly larger than launches were seen to dart out from cover and head for the *Olympia*. It was a moment of terrible peril, for every man on board knew that those tiny dark streaks on the water were torpedo boats, and if one of their deadly missiles should reach the flagship it might be her death-blow. Instantly the fire of nearly every ship in the squadron converged on the daring but diminutive assailants that came darting across the harbour like sharks, at a twenty-knot gait, the water foaming under their bows.

"Quick, Marline, train that port gun on 'em!" shouted Sandy, trembling with eagerness.

"Can't do it, sir! They 're too near and too low down!"

But if the *Olympia's* huge turret rifles could not reach them, her secondary battery could. The air resounded with crashing thunders of artillery, and an acre of water around the doomed torpedo boats

was torn into foam by the tons of shot and shell hurled at them. The mark was small, but "the men behind the guns," trained year after year in floating-target practice, knew their business. The foremost boat paused and reeled under the storm of steel. An instant later it blew up with a terrific report, and went to the bottom like a stone with all on board. The other staggered away toward the shore, where it was afterward found, a shattered and blood-stained wreck.

"Round in again to the ships!" commanded the Commodore, calmly. "Pass the word to the forward turret to sink the *Cristina* this time."

The men at the great guns, swarthy, smirched with powder and oil, cheered as they received the word.

"Give it to 'em, boys!" shouted Sandy. "Remember the *Maine*!" and the great starboard rifle thundered again, hurling its bolt of steel against the devoted Spanish flagship.

The other cruisers poured in their fire faster than ever. On the *Baltimore* a shell came crashing through the upper works, throwing splinters in every direction and wounding eight men. Still no one was killed, though hundreds of Spaniards were giving up their lives on every hand.

A shell fell on the deck of the *Olympia*, and, ricochetting, lay smoking close to a rapid-fire gun-

crew. Calkins, in charge of the gun, dashed up to the hissing terror and threw it overboard amid the cheers of his men. Another shell exploded fairly within Holmes's cabin, wrecking its belongings and setting the ship on fire. Instantly a stream of water, coolly and skilfully directed, extinguished the flames.

On the *Reina Cristina*, Admiral Montojo was no less brave. From his post on the bridge he directed the movements of his fleet, which was now moving restlessly to and fro, but suffering terribly from the American fire. Soon after the action commenced a shell exploded in the forecastle of the *Cristina*, which was attacked simultaneously by the *Olympia*, *Raleigh*, and *Baltimore*, and every man working the forward guns was killed or wounded. Splinters flew from the mast and struck down the helmsman, but a lieutenant sprang into his place and himself took the wheel. A shell from the *Raleigh* carried fire and destruction into the sleeping quarters of the crew. The flag was shot down, but run up again amid cheers from the descendants of the men who fought under Alva three centuries before.

A pitiless mass of steel crashed into the sick-bay, killing the wounded and the surgeons who were caring for them. The rudder and gear were damaged, and the ship was steered by hand. And now the ammunition-room was torn open by an explod-

ing shell from the *Olympia*, and the smoke-stack was riddled and a whole gun-crew blown to pieces. Flames burst from the doomed ship in huge, billowing masses. Still the Admiral stood on the bridge, the lines deepening in his bronzed face as he received one report after another from the decks of the tortured ship. Her broadside guns continued to roar back defiance, until only one gunner and one seaman were left to work them.

As the ammunition began to explode in the magazines the brave commander turned at last from the bridge, and giving orders to flood the ship and sink her, went over the side, with his tattered flag and what remained of his staff of officers.

But not to leave the fight! Five minutes later the Admiral's ensign was fluttering proudly on the *Isla de Cuba*, which at once became the object of attack, just as the commander of the *Cristina*, engaged in directing the rescue of the survivors of his ship, was struck by a solid shot and killed at his post.

The *Ulloa*, working its two only available guns, was sunk by a shell which "put out of action," in the grim words of the official report to Madrid, the captain and half the crew. The *Castilla*, with only one gun remaining, continued in action, firing regularly and hopelessly until she, too, was sunk—not until one hundred and twenty-three of her crew had been killed or wounded.

At last the American fleet ceased firing, and withdrew a few miles down the bay. From pity ? Ah, no ; for this was *war*. Refreshed by a hearty breakfast and the consciousness of victory the squadron bearing the Stars and Stripes returned two hours later,—“ returned,” says Admiral Montojo’s brief report, “ to destroy the arsenal and the ships which remained to me, opening upon them a horrible fire, which we answered as far as we could with the few cannon which we still had mounted.”

At one o’clock, with every Spanish ship sunk or smouldering into ruins, Commodore Dewey gave the signal to retire. The instructions of the Navy Department had been successfully carried out. The work had been done, thoroughly, completely. The Spanish naval power in the Pacific had vanished. Hundreds of Spanish sailors had been torn to pieces by shot and shell or burned or drowned below decks ; hundreds of wounded Spaniards crowded the hospitals on shore. The Americans lost not a single man, save one who died from apoplexy on the *McCulloch*, far removed from the scene of action.

Such was the memorable Battle of Manila Bay.

CHAPTER VIII.

A PERILOUS ENTERPRISE.

The crews slept soundly, though they still remained on deck, the night after the battle. The following day Cavite surrendered. One of the *Boston's* gunners, writing home, told the story of its capitulation.

"On Monday morning, the next day after the battle," he wrote, "the *Boston* and *Concord* went over to the navy yard. Soon after the Spanish Admiral sent word to Captain Wildes of the *Boston* that while he had surrendered, the Spanish General claimed that he and the army had not been defeated. Captain Wildes sent the message to Commodore Dewey, who was eight miles farther up the bay. Dewey's answer was:

" 'All right. We 'll go down and whip the army at noon.'

"The Spanish Admiral and two of his staff and the Spanish General and two of his staff came off to the *Boston* in a launch. Captain Lamberton

came over from the *Petrel*. Captain Lamberton asked the Spanish General what he had to say.

“ ‘ I am not whipped,’ replied the General.

“ ‘ Well,’ said Lamberton, ‘ we will come down and whip you at noon.’

“ ‘ I want to see Commodore Dewey,’ persisted the General.

“ ‘ You can’t see him,’ said Lamberton.

“ ‘ I am his equal in rank,’ retorted the gentleman.

“ ‘ There is not his equal in rank in the Philippine Islands,’ Captain Lamberton replied. ‘ There is only one man in the Philippines Commodore Dewey will receive. That is the Captain-General, and when he comes he must have his surrender with him.’

“ The General wanted to know where he was to go. Captain Lamberton told him that he could go to Manila, to Spain, or jump into Manila Bay, but he had to get out of San Roquet. He asked for twenty-four hours to consider the proposition. Captain Lamberton told him that he could not have twenty-four seconds after twelve o’clock. The General said he would evacuate, and he did.

“ Commodore Dewey permitted the Spanish troops to take their rifles and fifteen extra rounds of ammunition with them. The General said he would need both to protect himself from the insurgents. The Spanish flag was hauled down over the navy yard and a flag of truce was run up.

"Then that bold little *Petrel* steamed right up along the dock as coolly as if she was going alongside the quay at Mare Island. She is no bigger than a fishing-smack, but she carried two 6-inch guns on each side, and she was No. 4 in the line of battle. The little rascal, she was as big as the *Boston* or the *Olympia*, or any of them, and you ought to see her shoot! She's got no steam steering-beam. The wheel is in the break of the poop, and Captain Woods had to shout back his orders from the bridge.

"She accepted the surrender of the Spanish Admiral, too, quick; and then the saucy little wherry steamed around the bay assembling prizes. She's a daisy, the *Petrel* is!"

The fleet having been sunk or burned, and the strong fortress guarding the harbour being now under the American flag, the ships' companies had a chance to rest from the nervous and physical strain of the last few days.

With the bumboats of the natives swarming about them, and the flags fluttering gaily at their peaks, the cruisers assumed an almost holiday aspect. Yet every night their search-lights swept the bastions of Manila, where the Spaniards laboured feverishly to perfect their defences.

Early one evening, shortly after the great battle, Holmes was summoned to the bridge, where he

found three of the captains of the squadron in consultation with Commodore Dewey. He hastened to obey the order with some wonder, and having respectfully saluted, waited to hear what reprimand was to be given him. So far as he knew, he had attended faithfully to his duties, standing his regular watch in turn with the other engineers, and keeping everything in his department in apple-pie order.

"Mr. Holmes," said one of the officers, with a smile that did not portend any very direful reproof, "I understand that you are an exemplary assistant engineer."

"Thank you, sir," said Norman, blushing. It was plain from the twinkle in his superior's eye that he was bent on embarrassing the modest young New-Englander. The speaker was the jolliest of the captains in Manila Bay, and was extremely popular in the squadron.

"You have kept your engine in good order, with steam up," added the great man, "and you have borne with equanimity the damage inflicted in your berth by a hostile shell. Captain Gridley gives me to understand that you are a ready writer, and have recently sent several reams of note-paper to a lady not a thousand miles from Boston," continued the jolly captain, evidently enjoying the young engineer's confusion. "This proves that you are

always ready to do your duty, even when removed from the supervision of your superior officer."

"I—I try to, sir," stammered Norman, wishing with all his heart that the Commodore, who had condescended to smile grimly at his colleague's humor, would bring the captain to the point.

"We have decided," said the first speaker, more gravely, "to obtain some definite and reliable information concerning the state of affairs in the interior of these islands, especially Luzon and Mindoro, with reference to the native insurgents and the inland tribes. You have been highly recommended as a young man of energy and discretion such as will be necessary in acquiring this information. You must understand," he added, looking keenly at Holmes and entirely dropping his whimsical manner, "that the expedition contemplated will be an extremely dangerous one."

"I am ready, sir," said Norman, promptly. "Am I to go alone?"

"No. You may select two of the naval cadets, and we shall send an interpreter with you. Your first aim must be to meet Aguinaldo, the rebel leader, and deliver a verbal message to him. He is at present somewhere outside the northern suburbs of Manila. Having delivered this message, you will obtain from him the interpreter I spoke of, together with all possible information as to the numbers and

disposition of the forces under Aguinaldo's command, and the attitude of the natives to the north. The island of Mindoro you will visit yourself, bearing letters from Aguinaldo—which he will give you at once—to such native chiefs and leaders as will be likely to give your party a friendly reception. Of course, you will have a passport from us, in the name of the United States, commanding all it may concern to protect you and forward the purposes of the expedition in every possible way."

"What arms shall we carry, sir?"

"Your small arms—no sword, but revolvers only—with one hundred rounds each of ammunition. How soon can you be ready?"

"In ten minutes, sir," replied Norman, glancing about the deck.

"Whom do you select to accompany you?"

"Naval cadets Liddon and Whitney, sir," said the engineer without hesitation.

"Very well. You will notify them to be in readiness to start at about eight bells to-morrow morning. The *Olympia's* launch will be at the ladder, with steam up, to put you ashore. Your letters will be delivered to you this evening."

Seeing that the interview was at an end, Norman touched his cap and withdrew, leaving the officers smoking their cigars and talking earnestly together.

He at once sought out Liddon, whom he found

puffing philosophically at his meerschaum, on the fore-castle.

"Doc," said Norman, with less dignity than he generally observed in greeting an inferior officer, "there 's a big thing for us. Where 's Whit?"

"Down in the cabin, writing. Is he in it?" inquired the cadet, lazily.

"Yes. Get him up here, will you? I want to talk this over with you fellows right off. Don't say anything to anyone else."

"Right you are—sir!" rejoined Liddon, with a comical resumption of formality as he noticed the executive loitering near. "I 'll have him here in no time."

"Now, then, what 's up?" inquired the Doctor, as he returned with Cadet Whitney.

"We three are to go ashore to pick up information about the rebs and the islands at large. Captain B. called me up just now, and gave me the commission."

"Well, where do we come in?" asked Whitney.

"I was told to choose two others, and I took you and Doc Liddon. It 's a big job," he repeated.

"Bigger than you realise, probably," drawled Liddon, resuming his pipe after he had eyed it tenderly. "How 's that for a colour, Whit?"

"Oh, drop that, Doctor! I want to hear about this expedition. When do we go, and where?"

“ To-morrow morning at daybreak.” And Norman proceeded to give details, so far as they had been furnished him.

The three young men agreed that it was a “ big thing ”; and although Liddon declared that he did n’t enlist to dodge natives and crocodiles, and that he should run the first time a poisoned arrow came his way, it was plain that he was as excited as the others. Belts and pistols were overhauled, cartridges placed in readiness, and all preparations made for an early start.

Later in the evening a message came from Captain Gridley inviting all three to his private stateroom. He looked pale and ill as they entered, pulling off their caps. It was rumoured in the ship that he had somehow been hurt in the battle, but had told no one except the surgeon. The boys admired him intensely, and were pained to observe his weakness, from which, however, they supposed he would soon recover ; little guessing that within three short weeks the gallant Captain would be no more, and that they were looking upon his bronzed and kindly face for the last time.

Inviting them to take seats, he now spread out a service map upon the table, and proceeded to go over the proposed trip with them, giving them careful directions for every emergency that could be foreseen. As he passed over to Norman the ne-

cessary letters and papers, he took his hand and spoke a few words, kindly and gravely, concerning the great peril which he and his comrades were to encounter.

"If you should not return," he said, "I shall know that you perished in the performance of your duty. I trust and believe you all will come back safely, and I am sure that no young man in the squadron could carry out this mission more faithfully and thoroughly than Engineer Holmes. God bless you, my boys; and good-night. I probably shall not see you in the morning, as the doctor wants me to take things easy for a few days. Ensign Saunders will take charge of the deck at eight bells, and will see you off. Good-by!"

"Good-night, sir! Good-by!" chimed in the visitors as they bowed themselves out.

The dawn was hardly creeping up behind the dark hills of Luzon the next morning, when Norman, Liddon, and Whitney appeared on deck. They had laid aside the more showy appendages of their uniforms, and wore the simple white duck suits and straw hats which characterised well-to-do inhabitants of the Philippines. Beneath their blouses were well-filled cartridge-belts, and each carried his revolver and a stout clasp-knife.

The launch was stowed with provisions—mostly canned beef and hard-tack—enough to last two

weeks, and a liberal supply of quinine and a few other remedies were taken in a pack under the special supervision of the Doctor. A good pocket compass and a few trinkets such as savages admire completed their outfit. In the bows of the boat a small machine-gun was mounted, for use in an emergency. The event proved how fortunate it was that this precaution had been taken.

Promptly at eight bells the little launch came puffing around to the ladder, and a minute later had cast off and was steaming westward, with the expedition on board. Sandy, who had charge of the deck, looked longingly after them and waved his cap while they were in sight.

CHAPTER IX.

BROTHER AND SISTER.

" ON BOARD THE U. S. GUNBOAT 'EAGLE,'

May 2, 1898.

Annie :

When I heard that we were ordered to the
of Cuba, as I wrote in my last letter, I felt
blue. It looked as if all the fun was to be
Havana, Cardenas, and Matanzas. We 've
a luck, however, and the first real naval en-
count of the war has taken place between the
and three Spanish vessels. We were in action
in half an hour, and put to flight the *Galic*
s bigger than our little ship, and mounts two
breech-loading rifles, four 6-pounder rapid-
fire machine-gun, and two torpedo-tubes; and,
in addition, two small gunboats, which made things
difficult for us at first. This was the way of it. We
went off Cienfuegos last Saturday morning, and
in the forenoon the *Nashville* captured the *Argon*
doubtless have read in the papers. Imme-
diately after this capture, Commander McCalla

directed the *Eagle* to proceed to off the mouth of the harbour of Cienfuegos.

“ Our decks were cleared for action long before this, and we looked out for breakers, in more senses than one. Tickerson was the craziest of all to get at the enemy. He 's a regular fire-eater, which is all the funnier because of our old name for him. More than once while we were in action, Lieutenant Southerland ordered him under shelter as he was skipping about the deck, encouraging the men at the guns, and running the risk of being taken off by a stray shot or a splinter any minute.

“ Well, we took a position abreast of and about fifteen hundred yards away from a lighthouse on Colorados Point (look at the big map of Cuba I sent you), and within a few minutes, sure enough, out came the *Galicia* like a spider who sees a good fat fly alighting in the outskirts of his web. Behind her came a small gunboat, and we could just see another in the harbour.

“ Without waiting to talk the matter over, all three opened on us. They aimed well, too, for Spaniards, and the water spurted up all round us.

“ The range-finders of the *Eagle* gave the distance as about four thousand yards, at first, lessening gradually to half that distance during the fight. We trained our little 6-pounders on the *Galicia* and let 'em go.

"The smoke was awfully in our way, but we knew we hit her at least twice in the next fifteen minutes, which was doing well, as she was a small mark two miles away and coming bows on like a fiend, and changing the range every minute.

"When she turned tail and scurried into the harbour our Jackies set up a shout that ought to have reached to Boston. I wish you could have seen Girle, all smirched with powder smoke, swinging his cap and leading the cheering. He did n't look much like the fellow who asked you to dance at that first ball, plebe year! Tell Grace about this, when you write, as he may omit a detailed account of his personal doings.

"After a few minutes one of the young spiders came dancing out again and, supported by a fort on shore, engaged the *Eagle* once more. We had run in toward land a bit and a hot fight was promised; but, rather to our disappointment, the *Marblehead*, which upon the firing of the first gun had started full speed to our assistance, now arrived on the scene with a bone in her teeth, and poured in a well-directed fire from her splendidly handled battery that soon silenced the enemy, ashore and afloat.

"We did n't lose a man, and I never got a scratch. Tickerson had the fingers of his left hand pretty badly jammed by the recoil of one of our 6-

pounders, but the doctor fixed him up and says he will be all right in a day or two.

“ That same afternoon we were detached from our division to carry despatches to Admiral Sampson. When near Havana we learned that he was off Key West, to which port we are now bound. I shall have a chance to mail this letter there, as we expect to arrive to-morrow.

“ Our only other excitement was overhauling an English barkentine, the *Daisy*, yesterday. Ticker-son boarded her, and of course allowed her to proceed as soon as her nationality was satisfactorily shown. We expect to return to Cienfuegos soon and do some cable-cutting.

“ Tell me more about your schoolwork when you answer this. Time is likely to hang heavy on our hands while we are on blockade duty. I send a letter to Hallie by this same mail, but I guess you 'd better let her see yours, as I have n't taken up so much space in describing the action, in writing her. Love to Aunt Letitia and Mrs. Holmes.

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ DAVE.

“ P. S.—Can't you send some old *Harpers* or other illustrated papers ? A small bundle of them would be a blessing here. Weather hot and muggy.

“ D. R.”

· WOBURN, May 13, 1898.

“ *My dear Dave :*

“ How glad I was to receive that letter post-marked ‘ Key West ’ ! The salt water had gotten at it somehow, but in spite of the stains I could read every word, and I did, more than once—though I *am* only your sister ! Do be careful of yourself, dear ! It makes me shudder to think of those terrible shells flying so near you. I send two *Harper’s Weeklies* and a *Frank Leslie* by this mail ; also a *Sunday Journal* with lots of pictures.

“ Only think, Norman must have been in that battle at Manila ! It is a comfort to know from the newspaper reports that he was not hurt, but I cannot bear to think of the danger he was in all that forenoon. If one great shell had exploded in the *Olympia*, or she had run on to a torpedo— ! His last letter was dated from Hong-Kong, March 20th, and he was then impatient for Congress and the President to do something, one way or the other. Now they ’ve done it, and he knows what war is, as you do. I wonder where he is this minute ?

“ You ask about my school. I have forty-seven scholars in my room, all girls. They try me a good deal, sometimes ; but then I think of what the country is passing through, and am ashamed to find myself fretting over trifles. We have the Stars and Stripes flying over the schoolhouse, and every day

we sing national airs. The girls wear red-white-and-blue neckties and ribbons, and the air is full of enthusiasm. Two dear little things in pigtails cried, the other day, because I told them it would be impossible for them to enlist at once as nurses. One of them said she always was 'mamma's little nurse,' and the other had recently taken a *kitten* successfully through some feline disorder which I could not diagnose; and both were sure they were capable of hospital service. Bless their bonnie blue eyes! I don't doubt the sight of their childish faces would do the soldiers in any hospital a world of good! The boys in the next room, I hear, have formed a company of 'Woburn Guards,' and drill constantly. Dr. Maynard, the sub-master, has artfully availed himself of their warlike enthusiasm to get them interested in Cæsar, drawing diagrams of battles and the structure of that famous *bridge*, on the blackboard.

"Aunt Letitia is well, and 'takes to' Boston life wonderfully. She reads all the war news in the papers, and when I go home—that's what I call Mrs. Holmes's house now!—every Friday night, we have a nice time talking over things and planning a little. In about five weeks they are all going out to Magnolia, for the first part of the summer. Mrs. Holmes has secured rooms for Auntie and me, as well as herself and Hallie, at the great Oceanside Hotel. I shall hardly know how to behave before

so many and such elegant people as are likely to be there; and, to tell the truth, I'd just as lief go to some quieter place to rest. But Mrs. Holmes likes the gay, changing scenes and lively society of a summer resort, and of course we want to be with her, since she wishes to have us. Aunt Letitia is laying in a store of lavender ribbons and has two new dresses. We tell her she will be the belle of the place and poor Hallie and I will be quite eclipsed.

"I am glad you had a glimpse of Fred Larkin. He is one of the best-hearted of boys, and is likely to win a good deal of praise, I am told, by his newspaper work at the front. I only hope he won't expose himself too rashly. 'There's nobody to mourn for me but the office cat,' he said, when he called that last night. You know he's quite alone in the world. He says he's going to find a Spanish señorita in Cuba and marry her. He's rather pities the Dons, because they are the under dogs in the fight'!

"Now, dear, have you had enough of our daily life? Underneath all, you know how I am thinking of you and praying for your safety, morning and night. 'When this cruel war is over' no one will be more thankful and happy—no, not even Hallie, who is looking over my shoulder and just snaps her eyes at me as I write this—than

"Your loving sister,

"ANEMONE."

CHAPTER X.

THE EXILES.

The conscription of Pedro Cueva had been so sudden, the blow so unexpected and stunning, that he had not remembered to ask before leaving home his father's post-office address in Cuba. His uncle, Don Carlos, troubled himself no longer about the boy, who induced a comrade to write for him, begging that the address should be forwarded to the barracks. So Pedro sailed with the mere knowledge that his father and Isa were somewhere in the Province of Santiago de Cuba and that their infrequent letters to his uncle were mailed in the city of the same name. Of the geography of the island the boy had the vaguest possible notion; still, it was a comfort to know that the great ocean would no longer separate him from those he loved.

The voyage was long and hard. The regiment was crowded into an ill-ventilated, poorly equipped transport, the closeness and filth of which were emphasised by the sickness of the men. Several of

them were ill before starting, and three actually died at sea. Thanks to a strong constitution and sturdy body, Pedro was one of the first to recover from the wretchedness of nausea, and escaping from the overcrowded space below was allowed to stretch himself, with other sallow-faced convalescents, in the sweet air and sunshine on deck.

This was in the fall of 1897, and no hostile ships were feared. The enemy were all cooped up on the island, and as the health of the troops improved their spirits rose, and, smoking their cigarettes in picturesque groups, they sang alternately love ditties of Andalusia and Castile and war songs extolling the prowess of Spain and her many feats of arms in the past. •

So the days wore on, until the blue hills of Cuba, the beautiful "Pearl of the Antilles," rose on the horizon. For forty-eight hours more the ships moved slowly up the coast, past Cape Mais and Lucrecia and the low, sandy shores to the westward, until, one bright October morning, they entered a narrow bight of water, and coasting along the Peninsula del Sabinal anchored in the harbour of Nuevitas.

A large number of troops were concentrated there ; regiments were continually being detached and sent into the interior for duty on the "trocha," or fortified line stretching across the island. Others

marched eastward, and still others were shipped to Matanzas, Santiago, and even as far west as Havana.

It was pleasant to find his own language spoken in this far-off country, and Pedro availed himself of every opportunity to inquire for his relatives. The soldiers laughed at the boy, and his repeated questions became the joke of the company. Some teased him by pretending to have heard that his father and sister were *reconcentrados* at the capital; others, that Isabella had been compelled to marry a Cuban insurgent general, or, still worse, a "Yankee pig." Pedro bore it all patiently, and tried to be a good soldier. He was especially chivalrous to women and little children, and more than once protected them from his rougher comrades while on a raid.

In the course of a few months his regiment was ordered to Puerto Principe. The men were crammed into cars that would have afforded poor accommodation for cattle, and the train started. Nearly a quarter of the command were left in the hospitals at Nuevitas, prostrated with fever. Still the troops joked and laughed and kissed their hands to the pretty Cuban girls crowding around the railway stations.

The road wound through groves of palms, bananas, and orange trees, past deserted sugar plantations and tobacco fields, and along the banks of sluggish streams. At Minas, a little over half-way to their

destination, there was a long wait for a passing train; then they started on, more slowly, however, for the surrounding country was known to be infested with insurgents. The engineer kept his hand on the lever, ready to check and reverse his machine at the slightest sign of obstruction or attack.

"Come, Pedro," shouted a rough fellow in the cars, "give us a song."

"*Con gusto*"—"With all my heart," said Pedro; and he struck into one of the simple carols he had sung with the children, gathering olives on the banks of the Guadalquivir.

He was in the midst of his song, and the men were joining boisterously in the childish chorus, when the air was rent by a terrific report like artillery, followed by shrieks and cries of wounded men as the train stopped with a jerk.

Shouting, screaming, gesticulating like madmen, the soldiers came tumbling out of the cars, only to meet a volley of bullets from an unseen enemy hidden in the dense undergrowth.

The locomotive, or what remained of it, was lying on its side in the ditch beside the track, a shapeless mass, surrounded by clouds of steam. It had been blown asunder by a heavy charge of dynamite placed between the rails.

"Fall in! Fall in!" shrieked the Spanish officers, beating the terrified soldiers with the flat of

their scabbards. " Aim — fire! " and scattering shots from the regulars responded to the command.

In a few minutes discipline regained its sway and a line was formed.

" Charge! "

Into the bush they went, firing at will, and clubbing their muskets when the chambers were empty. The insurgents, firing from behind trees and using their machetes with terrible effect whenever within striking distance, slowly retired toward the hills, within whose fastnesses it would be idle to pursue them.

Pedro, who had sustained no worse injury than a severe bruise from being thrown against the side of the car, had joined the rush and had formed with the rest to repel the sudden attack. He fired his piece several times, aiming at the forest at large and hoping he was n't killing anybody. What if his father had joined the insurgents and were in that very band! The thought inspired him with such horror that he was discharging his rifle into the tree-tops when an officer struck down the muzzle angrily and bade him take care how he wasted ammunition by shooting birds instead of rebels.

In half an hour the excitement was over. The attacking force had been repulsed, leaving twenty of their number dead upon the ground. It was noticeable that in this, as in many other sharp skirmishes,

reported as "great battles" and "glorious victories" in despatches emanating from Madrid, there were no wounded and no prisoners when the fight was done!

Returning to the scene of the explosion, the troops found that the engineer and fireman had been killed instantly. Three other men, in the commissary department, which, with ammunition and stores, occupied the car immediately in the rear of the locomotive, were badly hurt, one fatally. The intention of the insurgents undoubtedly was to secure the stores, but in this they had failed, the dynamite having exploded too soon and wrecked the engine instead of the troop-laden cars.

An electrician, who was carried for just such emergencies, had already climbed a pole and telegraphed the story of the fight. Within an hour or two a train came backing down from Puerto Principe, and, taking the other in tow, hauled the troops on to the city, where the report of the "battle" had spread, and the victors were hailed with extravagant shouts of praise by the Spanish population. Crowds of wretched *pacíficos*, half clothed and three-quarters starved, squatted in groups and stared dully at the newcomers chattering garrulously of their adventure. The injured men were borne off in ambulances, the troops marched to their barracks just outside the town, and settled themselves

in their new quarters, passing wine-skins and exchanging cigarettes as gaily as ever.

Pedro had eagerly scanned the squalid groups at the station and along the streets of the town as they marched through it; but Isa was not there. On the morrow he timidly began his inquiries anew, and received the old answer—the Cuevas were totally unknown.

Nearly one hundred miles distant, an old man was sitting in his hut far up the slopes of the hills of Santiago. There was a low fire burning on the rude hearth, and a young girl, with long black hair hanging over her shoulders, was at this minute drawing from the ashes some sweet potatoes for their evening meal. These, together with a dish of rice and a jug of fresh water, she placed upon the table, and going over to the other occupant of the hut laid a small, brown hand upon his shoulder.

"Come, Father," she said in musical Castilian, with just a touch of Southern accent, "supper is ready."

The old man stroked her hand affectionately before rising; then moved his stool to the table while she took her place opposite.

"What have we to-night, little Isa?"

"*Como de costumbre*"—"The same as usual"—said his daughter, cheerfully. "The rice is very good to-night, Father, and the potatoes are ravishing!"

Cueva smiled as he took the proffered food. Then his face grew grave again.

"How long since I have heard from Carlos?"

"Nearly three months, Father."

"And he said nothing about Pedro! Shall we ever see the boy again? Why does he not come to his old father!"

"Oh, he will surely come," said Isabella, busying herself with the food and going to the fire a moment. "Pedro is good and true. He will come. Only we must be very patient, you and I, dear, and wait."

"I have waited and waited," exclaimed the other, striking his thin, sinewy hand upon the table. "When will this war be over, so that we may show ourselves in Santiago without fear of arrest or insult!"

Isa flushed as if at some unpleasant remembrance. She knew that even now she and her father were under the ban of the law for not obeying the edict to remove to the city. Only the proximity of the Cuban insurgents saved them from arrest and punishment, which they feared daily. Of the two war-like parties they feared the Cubans the less, and so remained in their mountain home.

"Rodrigues says the Americans will be here soon to help us and drive out the Spaniards," ventured the girl after a pause. "His captain heard it from a friend of General Gomez."

“ It will be a sad day for Spain when the United States declares war against her,” said Cueva, “ but ” he added, sternly, “ she deserves it, she deserves it. She cannot keep the island.”

“ Father, Rodrigues wishes you to join his company.”

The old man shook his head. “ I can help neither one side nor the other. I am too old and feeble. The time was, girl, when I would have fought, not against but for Spain. I served in the army before you were born, and would fain help the arms of Castile in the hour of need. But it is too late—too late!” After a pause, during which the old soldier had gazed into the fire and evidently recalled days long past, he resumed, more quietly: “ As for Rodrigues, do not trust him too far. He is brave as a lion, but his heart turns easily from one banner to another. He comes here often, Isa ?” And he gazed keenly at his daughter.

“ Father!”

“ I know,” said the Spaniard, smiling grimly. “ The daughter of the Cuevas of Andalusia is not for him. Our minds are one in that. But be not too kind to him. I like not that sidelong look of his, nor his slinking ways. If he should betray us——!”

“ I have never—I have never——” stammered the girl, her pale olive cheeks flushing.

“ You have never given him any hope that the sparrow might mate with the eagle, you would say, my child. True, but you cannot be too careful.”

“ You have said it would be better to leave this hut, Father, and place ourselves under the protection of the military in Santiago. Why not do it at once ? ”

“ *Mañana, mañana,* ” — “ To-morrow, ” murmured the old man. “ So long as we are unmolested and unthreatened, why should we hasten to leave these hills ? ”

“ Ah, if Pedro were only here ! ”

And at that moment, less than a hundred miles away as the kite flies over the hills of Cuba, Pedro was drilling with his company in the great camp at Puerto Principe, and wondering all the time, as he presented and shouldered arms, “ When shall I find father ? When shall I see little Isa ? ”

CHAPTER XI.

A DAY ON THE BLOCKADE.

AS he had confidently predicted, it was not long before Fred Larkin was on board one of the large battleships of the blockading squadron. He was not allowed, indeed, a berth on board ship, but he was regularly installed on one of the "Syndicate" Press boats, and no reporter was more welcome among the officers and crew of the regular warships. The *Witch* made frequent trips to and from Key West, and many a little commission was obligingly executed for the men on dull blockade duty by the representative of the *Boston Daily Bulletin*.

When nothing exciting was going on, Larkin improved the time by "writing up" the daily life on board the *Texas* or *Iowa*, or wherever he happened to be. There is no space here for more than one of his jolly and graphic letters, which gained for "Our Special Correspondent at the Front" such well-earned fame during the Hundred-Days' War. This one, in particular, gave such a clear picture of the

routine on shipboard that it deserves a chapter to itself.

“ It is not a very fascinating or wildly hilarious life,” wrote Larkin, “ that of a man forward on board a modern warship. There is a monotony and sameness of things that eats into the heart at times, and it is only the diversions caused by a wreck or a storm, or a series of battles like that recently experienced, that lend a welcome air of variety to the naval day.

“ The landsman, with his twenty-four hours well punctuated with work and sleep and pleasures, has been known to complain of the dull routine of his existence, but if he were compelled to put in a three-years’ cruise on one of our deep-water naval vessels he would return to his former scenes with relief.

“ Take an average day in the service.

“ To rise at 5.30 to the harsh notes of a bugle and drum is the order, except during the few winter months, when a half-hour’s grace is permitted. The ‘ musics,’ as the marine drummers and buglers are called, are summoned ten minutes before time by the corporal of the guard.

“ The two lads, rubbing the sleep from their eyes, take their stand near the forward hatch, and, at the word from the officer of the deck, break into the stillness of the early morning with a terrific hubbub technically known as ‘ reveillé.’ The hideous uproar

speedily brings a chorus of grunts and yawns, not unmixed with something stronger, from the occupants of the hammock-crowded berth deck, and presently the ladder leading above is thronged with half-clad figures mounting upward in a ghostly procession. Each one carries upon his shoulder his individual hammock, carefully lashed and fettered.

“ This he deposits in the receptacle prepared for the purpose, and then hies him to his mess, where he finds steaming coffee, *sans* milk, and barely sweetened, but extremely welcome as an eye-opener.

“ The spotlessly clean decks of naval vessels are proverbial. This cleanliness is the result of hours of hard, constant work every morning on board every ship in the service. It is to the executive officer that all praise or blame in reference to the condition of a ship belongs, and directly after the crew has had its early coffee he is on deck personally superintending the holystoning and scrubbing and perhaps painting.

“ He relieves the officer of the deck, who goes below for a light lunch, and then sees that the boatswain's mates and the captains of the different parts of the ship distribute their men to the best advantage. If it be wash day, the crew is allowed to attend to their laundry work before the scrubbing begins.

“ As the sailor's outfit consists solely of cloth

or white duck trousers, flannel inside and outside shirts, and the ordinary cotton hose, the operation of washing does not call for much skill or preparation. For instance, if the article to be renovated is the flannel shirt, Jack selects a clear part of the deck, sprinkles a little water upon the spot, then spreads his shirt, previously soaked, upon the deck.

“ Then with salt-water, soap, and a scrubbing-brush he sets to work. A subsequent rinsing completes the task, and the garment is fastened with bits of twine to the clothes-line stretched from mast to mast.

“ It must not be understood that every Jackie is his own washerwoman in the navy. There are degrees of opulence there as well as ashore, and the aristocracy in the service is as completely defined as in New York society. It is seldom that the ship's cook, who has the exclusive privilege of making and selling apple pies at twenty-five cents per pie, and the ship's barber, who pursues his tonsorial art at the rate of one dollar each per quarter for every man on his books, scrub their own clothing. They are rich enough to hire a needy landsman or coal-passer to do it for them. But the great majority of the men forward attend to their own laundrying, and they do it well, too.

“ Holystoning decks and scrubbing ladders and gratings with sand and canvas continue until 7.50

o'clock, when the call to 'spread mess-gear' is sounded by the boatswain's mate on watch. This is also the signal to clean up, and each Jackie grabs a deck bucket, gets his share of fresh water from the captain of his part of the ship, and makes his toilet, which, if not elaborate, amply suffices for his needs.

"After the washing the sailor's toilet consists of a vigorous rubbing with a coarse towel—his own, private property—and a hair brushing with the aid of an ancient brush and a small wooden-framed glass generally carried in the little chest, or ditty-box, which is the officially approved trunk of each Jackie.

"At the stroke of eight bells (eight o'clock) the call to breakfast is given. Salty air and an open, free life produce excellent appetites, and there is no dawdling in the race for the mess-tables on the berth deck.

"Breakfast over, the men are given until nine to smoke, then all hands are 'turned to' and the ship is cleaned up for Quarters.

"This latter ceremony is conducted daily, rain or shine. On ships of the old navy the men were mustered and inspected at their guns, but on vessels of the *Texas* class they are arranged in lines on both sides of the deck according to their division.

"The officers in charge of each division see that their men are either present or accounted for, and report the same to the executive officer. The latter

then reports to the commander of the ship and the men are dismissed. During week days the morning hours are generally devoted to drill. A settled schedule is made out when the ship goes into commission, and this is strictly adhered to.

“ Each ship has its general quarters, fire quarters, collision drill, abandon ship, arm and away boats, broadsword exercise, or something of similar character, and from 9.30 until noon the decks are alive with men under instruction.

“ Dinner is followed by a short rest, and at one o'clock ‘ turn to ’ is sounded again. During the afternoon, five days of the week, the crew is kept at work attending to the multifarious duties of the ship. Saturday afternoon is considered a half-holiday ; the smoking-lamp is lighted, and if the ship is in port, the men are allowed to see visitors and enjoy themselves according to their individual inclinations.

“ With mess-gear in the early evening, the working day ends. Supper is followed by a period of relaxation until the mellow notes of the bugle sound taps, and the boatswain’s mate’s whistle echoes through the decks in the last call of the day—‘ pipe down.’

“ There are many other incidents which go to make up the naval day— incidents requiring a volume to describe, but the above offers a fair idea of the ordinary routine on board ship.

“ At sea, when the ship's company is divided into watches, the monotony is greater than in port. It is during the latter time, with the fleet at anchor off some friendly city, or when the ship is tied up to a dock in one of the home navy yards, that Jack finds his hours filled with variety and pleasures sufficient to satisfy even his desires. It is then the liberty list—a potent term in the navy—is made out.

“ To discover one's name on the liberty list means shore, with its fascinating attractions, and if there is anything on this footstool the average sailor loves it is to ‘hit the beach’ with a few dollars in his pocket.”

One dark night Larkin found himself on the torpedo boat *Porter*. He was expecting the *Witch* to come for him, but she was called westward, and the reporter was left on board. He cheerfully suggested that they should throw him overboard and buoy him, but Lieutenant Fremont, although somewhat annoyed by the circumstances, concluded that this measure would be a little too drastic even for a newspaper-man; so he was made as welcome as the narrow quarters of the *Porter* would admit.

It would be a pity to take the story of that night out of Fred's mouth,—or pen,—so it shall stand as he gave it some weeks later, having meanwhile withheld it until active operations against Spain were at an end.

“ The incident occurred,” he said, “ at the time

when Sampson's fleet was blockading Havana. The *Porter* and the *New York* met one dark night under strange circumstances which would have justified either in destroying the other, and for a few seconds the lives of five hundred men were in the hands of one man. The torpedo boat lay so close under the cruiser's side that one could have tossed a biscuit against it. One turn of a wrist and the *New York* and her crew must have met the fate of the *Maine*.

"It appears that the *New York* was some distance from her blockading station. For the rest, you must know that the fleet was displaying no lights except an occasional electric-light signal; that the night was dark; that Cervera's fleet was not accounted for, and that his cruisers and destroyers were expected at any moment; that the *Porter* was on scout duty, and, more important yet, the usually infallible night-signal apparatus of the *New York* played Sampson false for once.

"As we crept out from the bay, ourselves invisible, to approach the invisible fleet, the ray of a search-light at the Morro flashed out in the darkness, a shaft of light, dimmed by distance.

"We cruised westward. I lay down on deck near a one-pounder—too near. Lieutenant Fremont went below for a map. Ensign Gillis—it was he who picked up a Spanish torpedo afterward by springing over and unscrewing its 'war-nose' so it

could be hauled aboard safely—was in charge of the *Porter* for the time. There was quiet until 2.30 A.M. Then the one-pounder beside me woke me as thoroughly as if it had been a thirteen-inch gun, and I raced to the conning-tower to see what had happened, and saw what seemed to be the very biggest ship in the world looming up on our port bow, indistinct in the gloom, but close enough to sink us without fail a second after the order to fire.

“ We had fired across her bow to stop her and learn if she were friend or foe. Foe it seemed she was, for our guns were trained on her, and the port torpedo was ready to leap from its tube and do for her what we expected she would do for us in a second or two.

“ Lieutenant Fremont stood before the conning-tower. Gillis had made out the loom of the stranger when we were a quarter of a mile away and had awakened his commander. Silently the *Porter* stole upon the dark warship. When we were but two hundred yards away, or less, the night fleet-signal was flashed by the torpedo boat—two white lights and one red. It burned for a second or so, and then it was turned off. There was no reply. The stranger, dark and unheeding, moved slowly westward.

“ The *Porter* shot close, so close that every man on her felt that desperate work was in hand, that

now we were in for it beyond recall. The *New York* is perhaps the easiest of the American ships to recognise, but so dark was it that she was strange to practised eyes. Moreover, the direction from which we approached was such that we had her masts and smoke pipes in a confusing line, and so were unable to distinguish the marks which, if seen clearly, would have proclaimed her identity instantly.

“ Our blowers were making a loud, droning noise. The movement of both vessels through the water added to the difficulty of hearing. Fremont’s voice rose so that I thought it must have rung through the strange ship. But the crew of the strange ship were rushing to their guns.

“ ‘ Stop those blowers ! ’ Fremont said.

“ He was calm, even deliberate. His eyes swept forward and then aft.

“ ‘ Are the guns trained on her ? ’ he asked.

“ ‘ Aye, aye, sir,’ came from both one-pounders. The torpedo, too, was ready. It had been tested for pressure but a few hours earlier. At each gun a Jackie stood like a statue, his shoulder bent against the rest, his eye on the enemy.

“ As Jackie answered ‘ Aye, aye, sir,’ his commander’s voice rang out again. This time he was hailing. The voice was very stern and menacing and the inflection rising,—

“ ‘ What—ship—is—that ? ’

" No answer.

" ' Fire across her bow ! ' "

" Bang ! went our bow gun, and the metal rattled as the men shoved another shell home and trained the piece again.

" ' Show the night fleet-signal,' Fremont said, and it flashed again—two white lights above a red one. We were under the stranger's quarter now, close aboard. For one of us there was no escape. At that range a torpedo must destroy the big ship inevitably.

" A second after our signal burned the stranger's signal mast blazed and there hung an answering signal, but not the right one. For a moment it flashed through Fremont's mind that an enemy might be attempting to use the American signals.

" There was no time to think about it. There was a flash from the stranger's forward fighting top and a shell whistled over us. Some man in the top had fired without orders, it seems, but of that we knew nothing.

" Fremont had been hailing at the moment and his face had been turned away from that top from which the gun was fired.

" ' Did that shot come from her ? ' he shouted.

" ' Yes, sir,' said a Jackie and I in the same breath.

" All these things had occupied but a few mo-

ments, passing with inconceivable rapidity. For a second, perhaps, Lieutenant Fremont stood still and silent and his men and those on the decks high above us held their aim and their breath, and waited for a word which would turn loose a torpedo from the *Porter* and a hail of fire from the flagship.

"In that long second Fremont, holding the great cruiser at his mercy, even more than the cruiser held us at hers, weighed the chances and gave them one more chance. It was to be their last. I read it in the sudden straightening of his form and the menacing hail which I hear yet,—

" 'What—ship—is—that ?' "

"On the heels of that hail came an answer from the cruiser, and at the first English word our men let go the breath they had been holding in one great sigh of relief, for the answer rang clear and loud,—

" 'This is the *New York* !' "

"On the cruiser's deck there was a sound as of men shifting their feet, and a confused murmur as they fell away from their guns.

"The *Porter's* commander spoke again, and this time there was no menace in his voice, but wonder only.

" 'Is that Captain Chadwick ?' "

" 'Yes,' answered the *New York's* Captain; 'is that the *Porter* ?' "

“ ‘ Yes, sir.’

“ ‘ Why did n’t you show the night fleet-signal ?’

“ ‘ We did, sir, twice. There was no answer the first time. The second time—just now—the *New York* displayed the wrong signal.’

“ Captain Chadwick thought that could not be so, but every one on the torpedo boat knew it was, and after some more explanation which did not approach recrimination the *Porter* swung away from the flagship and glided off into the night.

“ A torpedo man from the *Porter* and an officer of the flagship afterward asked each other what would have happened if the *Porter’s* hail had not been answered just when it was.

“ ‘ Do you know what our next order would have been ?’ asked the flagship man.

“ ‘ No,’ said his friend from the *Porter*. ‘ What would it have been ?’

“ ‘ Full speed ahead and ram!’ was the reply.

“ The torpedo man laughed. ‘ You’d never have rammed us,’ he said. ‘ Remember the *Maine*!’ ”

CHAPTER XII.

AMONG THE INSURGENTS.

As soon as the *Olympia's* launch was clear of the harbour of Manila, Holmes changed her course to north-west. By nine o'clock the expedition had passed Bulacan and was approaching the low coast to the west of this important settlement. The water shoaled rapidly, as was shown by repeated soundings, and the young leader, not wishing to end his cruise at the outset by a shipwreck, stationed a man in the bows to look out for sunken rocks.

Within two hundred yards of the shore the boat was stopped, and Holmes scanned the beach eagerly for signs of human life.

"Here 's where the escort was to meet us," said he to Whitney, as he searched through his marine glass every cranny of the shore. "I hope they have n't gone back on us."

"Is n't that something waving in the bushes, away over to the left?"

Norman brought his glass to bear on the point indicated.

"You 're right," he exclaimed excitedly, giving his hat three waves. "Go ahead, half-speed, engineer."

The launch slowly crept in toward the shore, and presently half a dozen men, with rifles and cartridge-belts, emerged from the shrubbery and came down to the water's edge, brandishing their arms and pointing to a safe landing-place.

The ensign and the two cadets, followed by the interpreter, leaped ashore as the boat grounded.

"Come here to-night at ten," said Norman to the engineer, who with one man, was left in charge of the launch, "and if we don't show up within an hour, stand off and on until morning. We will signal you with a small white flag, waved three times. Good-by."

"Good-by, sir." And away puffed the launch, leaving the expedition in the hands of their escort.

The interpreter, whose name was Maso, had already exchanged a few sentences with three wild-looking men, and vouched for their character, the rendezvous having been previously arranged through a messenger who had been sent to the squadron by Aguinaldo, the insurgent General.

No provisions were to be taken on this trip, which was to be a flying one to the camp of the rebels and back.

Holmes gave the order to start, and the whole

party began the march to the interior. The path, which was a well-trodden one, lay through a luxuriant tropical growth of nipa palms, bananas, tree-ferns, orange, lemon, and other fruit trees. Here and there were plantations of *abaca*, or hemp, which is the chief article of export from Manila. Some of these plantations were thriving, but others were evidently "abandoned farms," covered with tall, rank grass.

"This must be *cogon*?" said Liddon, plucking a few blades as they waded through one of the open tracts. The interpreter nodded.

"When a native wishes to start a farm," continued the young botanist, to whom every step of the way was full of interest, "he clears away the forest trees, burns them, and cultivates the ground, just as we do Down East [Liddon was a Bangor man]. Sooner or later comes this *cogon* grass, which is almost good for nothing. The farmer gives up the fight (which *is n't* the way in Maine) before long, and clears another piece of land, so that big tracts of grass are left all over the half-civilised parts of the islands."

"*Cogonales*," assented Maso, who was pleased with the information and interest shown by the officer.

"Won't cattle eat the grass?" inquired Whitney.

“ The young green shoots of it when one of the *cogonales* has been burnt off, as they sometimes are; but the hay is too tough and wiry, like our ‘ meadow hay ’ at home, only more so. It does pretty well, though, for thatch, and sometimes the natives use the stems as fuel, to cook by.”

Talking in this way, the party moved on through the forest, making rapid progress toward their destination. At one point, not very far inland, they traversed a large field where rice (the staple food of the natives) was being harvested. They noticed that the only implement used by the reapers was a small knife with which they cut the heads of grain from the stalks one at a time! The rice was then trodden out under the feet of women and girls and the hull removed by pounding in wooden mortars. The winnowing was done with flat baskets, rice and chaff being tossed up into the air together, and the more rapidly falling grain caught on the basket which was then jerked aside in time to allow some of the chaff to fall to the ground. The operation was repeated until only clean white kernels remained.

“ Great chance for some of our reaping machines,” observed Liddon. “ Would n’t it astonish these fellows to see the harvesting on a Western farm! ”

“ If we end by taking the Philippines,” remarked Whitney in a lower tone, “ we may find a good market here for that sort of thing.”

" I don't know who would buy them," laughed Hugh. " Wages are only from five to ten cents a day in the islands."

" I wonder how they get their hemp ready for market ?" asked Holmes. " Did you ever see them do it, Doc ?"

" No, but I 've read about it. Manila hemp, known hereabouts as *abaca*, is the fibre of the *Musa textilis*——"

" Oh, give it to us in ' United States '!"

" Well, wild plantain, then. There 's some, over there, is n't it, Maso ? I thought so. It looks almost exactly like the banana plant, you see. To extract the fibre, the plant is cut, and the leaf-stems are separated and allowed to wilt for a short time. Each is then drawn between a block of wood and a knife, hinged to the block and provided with a lever and treadle, so that it can be held down firmly on the stem. By this means the pulp is scraped from the fibre, which is wound around a stick as fast as it is drawn from under the knife. It is next spread in the sun for at least five hours, to dry, and is then baled."

" How much in a bale ?"

" The regulation weight is two hundred and forty pounds, I believe. Nearly a million bales were exported last year."

" Pretty crude way of working it, though, like

the rice scheme," suggested the other cadet. "Is n't there anything better used anywhere?"

"Not a thing. There's a big fortune waiting for the Yankee that can invent one."

"What's this bothering vine, or bush, that keeps tripping me up?" asked Whitney, as he tumbled for the twentieth time in a thick jungle which they entered a few minutes later.

"Rattan, my son. Probably you were well acquainted with the finished product in your younger days."

"Do they use it for anything here?" asked Whitney, with a good-natured shove at his companion.

"Well, rather! Rattan stems—which you see are astonishingly long and tough, and all of a bigness—are used by the natives in place of ropes and cables, or are split and are employed for tying together parts of house frames, canoes, fences, carts, and agricultural implements, as well as for binding hemp-bales, sugar-sacks, and the like."

"And for beds and chairs," added the interpreter, who had listened to the conversation. "Big lot men get living by cutting and splitting rattan."

It was now intensely hot, and the young officers were beginning to wonder if they would have to cross the whole island to find the rebel leader, when a dozen men sprang into the path in front of them, with presented muskets.

The naval men instinctively drew their revolvers, but Maso darted forward, together with two or three of the escort, and explained matters to the picket guard (for such it proved to be) of the insurgent camp.

The soldiers all took off their hats to the Americans, as the latter marched between their ranks. Ten minutes later they saw smoke rising among the trees, and entered the outskirts of the encampment itself.

There were no tents, but a large number of thatched huts, in and about which were strolling numbers of armed men, who eyed the newcomers with suspicion and handled their muskets so carelessly that Norman could not help feeling a little nervous.

Notwithstanding the hostile looks and gestures of the natives, the white visitors were received with a hearty greeting by a man who was evidently in authority, and were conducted to a hut where they were served with fruits and wine—the latter of which they prudently declined.

After about a half-hour's delay, they were told that the General would receive them. On emerging from the hut they found a native regiment drawn up at parade, and were conducted through the camp or village to a hut much larger than the rest.

An erect, rather slight, swarthy man, with a decidedly Chinese cast of countenance, came to the

doorway to meet them and grasped their hands cordially, bidding them welcome in broken Spanish. It was the famous Aguinaldo himself.

He was a much younger man than they expected to find, but his bearing expressed great energy and force of character, and in the flash of his dark eyes could be plainly read the craft, the pride, and the ambition that distinguish this best-known individual of the whole Philippine race.

Bidding them be seated, he conversed with the strangers courteously for a few moments on such subjects as the weather, the state of the crops, etc.

Norman, however, felt that he must lose no time in returning to the launch, and hastened to deliver his message.

The chief listened attentively, nodding his head at the important points.

"Tell the Commodore I will be there," he said, as Holmes concluded. "It is best that we should work together to free my people from the power of Spain. We have suffered long," he added with an eloquent gesture. "The time has come for us to be free!"

He had raised his voice slightly, as if willing that his words should be heard beyond the little circle of visitors; and a wild shout from the ranks outside proclaimed that they had produced their intended effect.

The conversation lasted but a few minutes more.

The Americans were invited to dine with Aguinaldo, and rice, plantains, boiled egg-plant, and some sort of fish and fowl were served. The chief spoke partly in imperfect Spanish, partly in *Tagalog*, the language of most of his followers. Among the officers who came and went, Norman noticed several in uniforms evidently captured from the Spanish.

After the meal was over the guests were politely told they could remain where they were, or take a siesta in the hut to which they had first been shown. The latter suggestion was adopted.

The naval expedition rested until about four o'clock, as it was almost impossible to travel in the intense heat during the middle of the day. Liddon kept his eyes open, and used his note-book more than once, with Maso at his side to translate the information which came from the Filipinos. Among other things he noticed a number of copper ornaments worn by the wilder-looking insurgents, and tried hard to find where the metal was obtained. It was impossible, however, to locate the mines definitely, although he was given to understand that it came from the north.

The fact is that copper is found in many parts of the Philippines, and cupreous pyrites are not infrequently met with accompanying quartz veins, but in such small quantities as to exclude all commercial value. In the central mountain ranges of

Luzon, however, considerable deposits of copper ore are distributed and were worked by a tribe of natives long before the advent of the Spaniards. They obtain the ore in excavations, which they make with the aid of wood fires, thus softening the rocks. They separate the ore according to quality, and roast the poorer repeatedly before smelting it. Their furnace is a cylindrical hole, walled with clay, about twelve inches deep and eight inches in diameter, and they use blowers of bamboo worked with plungers to produce the requisite draft.

A Spanish company was established to work these deposits on a large scale. Furnaces were built, machinery was put up, but what the natives could accomplish the European metallurgists failed to do, although in those times copper was worth over \$500 per ton. The absence of roads told, and the enterprise eventually collapsed.

A very peculiar deposit of native copper occurs in the neighbourhood of one of the Philippine Mineral Syndicate's concessions. The metal is found in a bed of gravel, in little nuggets of a globular or pear-shaped form. It assays over ninety per cent. of copper, with a not inconsiderable admixture of gold and silver. The extent of the deposit and its commercial value have not been determined as yet, and its origin is rather puzzling.

Little is known of Philippine gold, because there

is no official control of the output, or tax on it. The miners live in isolated districts and villages, with rare communication between them. And the universal man of business is the omnipresent Chinaman, now storekeeper with a fixed abode, now perambulating peddler, who penetrates the most distant settlements, buys the gold with his wares, and sends it out of the country, over to Hong-Kong, or Amoy, or elsewhere. It is not his business to swagger over the volume of trade; in fact, he keeps it dark. Those who know are aware that the gold export is considerable, and very much exceeds the official computation, whatever that may be. "Paracale" gold is well known in Manila, but few Manilese know where the Paracale is, and still less have ever visited the place. Yet it is a prosperous village, with a good deal of trade and a large native mining population. The Paracale gold dust is melted into tiny ingots, a small bivalve serving as mould, so that the gold shows the shape of the shell. These tiny ingots are tested by the Chinese purchaser, the traces of whose probing auger are always in evidence on the ingots.

Disgusted at the unwillingness of the natives to disclose any further particulars, or to enrich his note-book with startling revelations of Philippine wealth, the cadet sauntered back to the hut where the others had taken refuge from the sun.

"Come, Doctor," called Whitney, as his shadow fell across the threshold, "we 're ready for the return trip."

"We must be on board by ten o'clock, sure," added Holmes, who felt that the responsibility for the safety and success of the expedition rested upon his shoulders.

The party was soon in marching order, and, receiving a stunning salute from the ranks of the insurgents, who had once more been drawn up in line to speed the parting guests, they started southward over the now familiar path.

After several hours of steady tramping they caught a glimpse of the sea, and Norman's heart began to beat more quietly. In a little over two hours they would be on the launch, with the first part of the scouting trip successfully carried out.

Unfortunately, he crowed before he was out of the woods.

"Hurrah!" he cried. "Three cheers for the blue sea yonder, boys!"

The cheers were given with a will, and Whitney fired a shot from his revolver to help them out, though Maso tried, too late, to stop him.

"No fire!" the interpreter exclaimed, energetically. "Maybe Spanish soldiers about here. Wait till boat come and take us off."

"I did n't think of that," said the cadet, sheep-

ishly restoring the revolver to his belt. "Let 's get a move on, then, and reach the shore as soon as we can. The launch will be hanging about ahead of time, I daresay."

They hurried on, the more hastily that dusk was beginning to close in and make progress through the woods more and more difficult. At length they were within less than half a mile of the point of embarkation, and were just starting forward on a run, as they emerged from the dense thicket, when Maso called out to them sharply, "Down! down!" and dropped to the ground, pulling Holmes with him. The others obeyed instinctively, and not a moment too soon, for even while they were in the act of dropping, the reports of a dozen rifles rang out from a clump of bamboos not fifty rods away, and the bullets whistled over their heads like angry hornets.

"This way—quick!" cried the interpreter, crawling off on all fours, almost as quickly as a monkey, through the tall grass and tangled shrubbery. The rest followed.

Presently he stopped and listened. Then he turned to Holmes, as the leader of the party, and spoke in low tones.

"Soldiers between us and the sea," he said, impressively. "Must try 'nudder way."

They crept off at right angles to their first course, hoping to make a circuit. For five minutes they

kept on, then Maso lifted himself cautiously to reconnoitre.

Almost instantly he dropped back and shook his head.

"More soldiers—forty, fifty. We must surrender."

"Not much!" said Norman, drawing his revolver and glancing at the chambers to be sure they were full.

Liddon and Whitney followed his example.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE NORTH SHORE.

While armed regiments were hastening to the camps at the South, and the Navy Department was straining every nerve to put its whole fleet of ships, new and old, into commission, and despatching them to Key West, the West Indies, Hawaii, and far-off Manila, the feeling of the people in the large cities and towns on the northern Atlantic seaboard was in a condition bordering on panic. Not a day passed without the appearance of great, staring head-lines in the papers, announcing "Probable Destination of Cervera's Fleet," "Boston to be the Object of Attack," "Enormous Indemnity will Probably be Demanded"; or, "Mysterious Squadron Reported off the Coast of Maine," "Two Warships Seen near Newfoundland," "Several Long, Dark Steamers Sighted," and the like. Although the mysterious Spanish ships never materialised, and the authorities at Washington again and again assured the distressed inhabitants of Newport, Boston, Gloucester, and other cities that the supposed

fleets were but myths, and invariably resolved themselves into fog-banks, or, at most, into innocent, barnacled old "tramps" sailing under our own or British flags, apprehension continued.

Seaside cottages and building sites were in the market for a song. Proprietors of hotels once filled with eager seekers for ocean breezes wrung their hands in despair, as engagement after engagement was cancelled by their old "stand-by" summer boarders. The very preparations made by the Government to fortify the most exposed portions on the coast carried new terrors to the hearts of the timid. The sea was still peopled by phantom "commerce-destroyers," and substantial war-risk premiums fattened the surplus of many a marine insurance company. There were even instances of "bombardment insurance" placed on valuable property in exposed situations.

Among those disposed to give heed to these rumours of peril was Mrs. Holmes, who declared she would spend the summer in St. Louis, unless the war came to an end. Miss Letitia Rexdale, however, was made of sterner stuff, and, backed by Hallie, succeeded in persuading her friend, as we have seen, to take rooms at Magnolia. It is possible that Hallie felt nearer Dave when she looked out from her east window upon the blue ocean; at any rate she felt happy there, and, as no disaster

occurred and it became more evident daily that the Spaniards had all they could do to protect their own cities and colonial possessions, her mother's fears gradually subsided.

Every morning Hallie was down in the office before breakfast, to read the paper the moment it arrived. Sometimes Annie would meet her there by appointment, and they would take an early spin on their wheels along the shady roads of the beautiful "North Shore."

Now and then was great excitement among the guests as a huge steamship or low-lying monitor would appear in the offing and steam slowly and silently past the gay summer resort; and the word would fly swiftly around the piazzas that the strange ship was one of the North Atlantic Patrol.

"It does make me so comfortable and reassured to see them," Mrs. Holmes confided to a new acquaintance. "I feel just as I do sometimes at home, when I wake up nervous in the middle of the night, and see a big, broad-shouldered policeman walking past the house, swinging his club."

As for Hallie, her thoughts would fly far southward where the young ensign was serving his country on another ship-of-war—perhaps at that moment "fighting his gun" in a terrible battle—but here she would turn resolutely away and try to find something useful for her own hands to do.

Many a walk she and Aunt Letitia and Annie took, especially one that led them through a grass-grown woods-road, so near the shore that the peaceful murmur of the surf mingled with the wind's low sighing among the forest trees over their heads as they walked.

Their favourite resting-place was at a point not far from Rafe's Chasm, where a stunted pine over-shadowed a little niche on the brow of the high cliff that starts boldly up from the water's edge. There they could sit or recline on a couch of pine-needles, looking off on the ocean and watching the fishing-boats and pleasure-craft heading into Gloucester Bay, or faring forth on the broad bosom of the Atlantic.

There they talked of the old New Hampshire farm, the bright Annapolis days, and the brothers (and lovers) who were absent.

One day all three ladies were in their favourite retreat when they heard footsteps crushing through the shrubbery that grew down to the very margin of the cliffs.

Glancing round to see who the intruder was, Hallie's eyes met those of a young man in a naval uniform. He paused abruptly, raised his cap with a certain freedom of manner, and, uninvited, joined the group.

"Beautiful view from here, ladies," he remarked,

with the easy effrontery of a man who feels sure of his own attractiveness.

Miss Letitia turned sharply to face the newcomer.

"Don't know you," said she, abruptly. "Who are you?"

This was rather a facer, but the young fellow was only disconcerted for a moment.

"Merely a summer boarder at the Point, madam," he replied, suavely. "I trust I may be permitted to share this lovely prospect with you?"

"Welcome to all the prospect you want," said Miss Rexdale, "but I don't feel called on to share it with—you did n't tell me your name?"

"He seems to be from the navy," whispered Anemone timidly. "Perhaps he knows Dave or Norman."

"Navy?" interrogated Aunt Letitia, still eyeing the intruder with disfavour.

"Formerly, madam; not at present. I resigned on account of—well, I did n't admire the society into which I was thrown. So I resigned."

"H'm!" ejaculated Miss Letitia, now strongly incensed. "'T was a good time, just as a war was breakin' out. I guess the navy was resigned to your goin'! Good-day, sir." And she turned her back squarely upon him.

"Oh, don't send me away," said the ex-navy-man, with a bold look of admiration at Hallie. "It would give me great pleasure——"

Just at this minute, to Hallie's intense relief, an old gentleman of her acquaintance, one of the Oceanside guests, made his appearance on the path a few rods distant.

"Oh, Mr. Borden!" she called out, in her clear, sweet tones. "Do come here just a minute. There 's something we want to show you."

The young man glanced with lowering brows towards the approaching pedestrian; then smiled disagreeably, and, with a familiar "Good-by, ladies; see you later," took his departure.

It was not until a good many weeks later that Hallie discovered the identity of the unwelcome stranger. It was no other than ex-Cadet Stevens, already introduced as a classmate of Randall and Warren.

With the exception of this unpleasant incident, life at the great seaside hotel flowed smoothly enough. Nearly every day there was a walk to the beach, where a good sea-bath was enjoyed. There were tennis and golf and bicycling, and in the evening a merry dance in the ballroom. Wealthy and famous people, pretty girls by the score, college undergraduates, children in braids and knickerbockers, came and went as the season advanced, affording endless diversion to Mrs. Holmes, who enjoyed it, after her quiet winter, as a child enjoys a play.

Still the war dragged on, and the papers made the most of reports of actual engagements along the coast of Cuba, and prognostications and rumours of others which never took place. The death of brave young Ensign Bagley, off Cardenas, was a great shock to Annie and Hallie, who had met him at the Naval Academy, and who could not help saying, "What if it had been——!"

All this time they did not dream of the real nature of the peril in which Norman and his comrades were placed, on the shores of Manila Bay; and to them we must now return.

CHAPTER XIV.

OUT OF A TIGHT PLACE.

"Better not fight," urged Maso, his knees knocking together. Ordinarily the Filipino interpreter was a brave fellow, as subsequent events proved; but now he was plainly panic-stricken. "Too many soldiers—shoot white men and beat Maso to death," he added, with chattering teeth.

"Don't you believe it, old fellow," muttered Norman, cocking his revolver, as renewed and louder shouts showed that the enemy were closing in. "Got your pieces ready, fellows?"

"Aye, aye, sir!" responded Liddon, who, in spite of his prognostications of cowardice, was perhaps the coolest of the four. "We've 'cast off and provided.' Say when, Mr. Engineer!"

Whitney crouched beside the others, a look of determination on his face, his revolver ready.

"When I say three," whispered Norman, "rise and fire two shots apiece. Then drop and follow me."

The interval of perhaps half a minute that succeeded this order seemed an age to the young officers. The Spaniards drew near, discharging their pieces and uttering wild cries to terrify the little band of scouts.

At last Norman caught sight of a military hat advancing through the undergrowth to the left of their position.

"Now," he shouted, springing to his feet and firing his revolver twice right into the faces of the astonished soldiers.

The two cadets followed suit, with such accurate aim (for revolver drill had been a part of the ship's routine) that three of the enemy threw up their hands with a shriek and fell.

"This way!" called Holmes in low but excited tones, as he dropped on all fours and retreated rapidly.

"Away from the boat——?" began Whitney.

"Obey orders!" interrupted Norman sharply over his shoulder.

Off they went in single file, until a hundred yards or more had been covered. As they paused for breath, it was discovered that the interpreter was missing.

"Where 's Maso?" exclaimed Liddon. "Say, I believe that fellow led us into an ambuscade! That would be Spanish all over, and I 'll bet he 's got Dago blood in him."

"It can't be helped now," panted Norman. "Come on, fellows, we have n't a moment to lose."

He dove into the tangled shrubbery again, stooping low, and began to work round in a circle toward the sea. Five minutes of this work brought them almost in sight of the shore again, when to their dismay a stern voice was heard directly in front, commanding "Halt!" and there was a squad of Spanish soldiers occupying a position between them and the coveted beach.

The scouts dropped in the grass, but too late. The quick orders, in Spanish, "Aim—Fire!" and a storm of bullets *zipping* through the twigs over their heads told that they were discovered. At the same time a triumphant shout in the rear proclaimed that their first assailants, maddened by the loss inflicted on them, were advancing to the attack.

"Surrounded!" groaned Whitney. "It 's all up with us now. Here they come, with bayonets fixed. I 'll wave my handkerchief, or they 'll cut us to pieces!"

"NO!" shouted Norman, drawing his revolver again. "Make ready for them, boys! Never say die! Let 'em have it! Hurrah!"

He was just springing to his feet when his shouts and the crack of the enemy's rifles were drowned by a roar from the direction of the bay; and at the

same instant a solid shot tore through two Spanish soldiers and went crashing among the trees.

"The launch! the launch!" cried both cadets at once. "That 's the machine-gun!"

"Give it to 'em!" shouted Norman, letting go one cartridge after another at the paralysed foe in front, while the others turned their pieces no less effectively on the squad in the rear.

Another spiteful report from the marine battery, imperiling the lives of the Americans as well as their assailants. The latter now fled precipitately, leaving their dead and wounded on the ground.

"We must light out of this," said Whitney; "or the launch will make Spaniards of us."

The three broke cover and ran in a diagonal direction, so as to be out of range of that terrible gun, for the beach. Reaching it safely, they were joined by Maso, who, it seemed, had managed to creep down to the water's edge and signal the launch within hailing distance, when he had pointed excitedly toward the scene of battle and begged them to fire.

No time was lost in getting on board and steaming away. As it was, a few rifle-shots followed them, the bullets, however, falling wide of the mark.

As soon as the party was out of range, mutual congratulations and remorseful praise of Maso were

in order. By Norman's direction the launch was now headed to the southward, and as it proceeded on its course at half-speed the tired scouts turned in for a short night's rest.

Bright and early the next morning they were up, and as soon as breakfast was over the young engineer devoted himself to preparing a report to be sent back to Captain Gridley on the launch when they should have been safely landed on Mindoro.

The result of this conference with Aguinaldo is now a matter of history. About twenty-five hundred rifles, a large amount of small-arms ammunition, several large ship's guns, one converted Krupp gun, and various smaller modern pieces, with considerable amount of powder and projectiles were at once handed over to the insurgent chief at Cavite.

Encouraged by the friendly attitude of Commodore, or rather *Admiral*, Dewey, as we must now call him in accordance with the promotion he had earned by his great victory, the natives began a campaign of renewed vigour against their ancient oppressors, and within a few weeks completely invested Manila.

"It is little short of marvellous," wrote a correspondent, in September of this fateful year, "how rapidly the insurrection has gained ground in this short time, and how extensive and successful the

operations of the army have been. Although they never could have taken Manila, even with the Spanish fleet destroyed and the port blockaded, except through the slow process of rigorous investment and by cutting off all supplies, still the insurgents managed in a very few weeks to besiege and capture numerous small Spanish positions in the provinces, and they completely overran the whole island of Luzon, together with seven adjacent islands, and at the present date hold possession of every foot of this territory except the Spanish post at Albay in the province of the same name."

By noon the launch was clear of Manila Bay, and felt the force of the sea heavily in the fifty-mile stretch between Corregidor and Lusang. The crossing was made in safety, however, and nightfall found them under the protection of the island. Having anchored during the few hours of darkness they proceeded at full speed to the eastward, along the north shore of Mindoro, passing through the straits of Verde Island without going up the bay to Catalpan, where Maso had been informed there was a small Spanish gunboat lying in wait for prizes. The second evening found them off the mouth of the Adlobang River, their present destination. Here Maso informed them they could land in safety, and carriers could be obtained at Naujan, a few miles up the river.

At sunrise the next morning, therefore, they embarked in the dingey, not caring to risk stranding the launch on a hidden shoal. Two or three natives had been drawn to the landing-place by curiosity, and Maso by a promise of reward persuaded them to run ahead by land and announce the coming of the Americans.

Whitney and Liddon took turns at the single pair of oars, with Norman in the bows of the little craft to fend off in case of snags or other obstacles to their progress. In this way they rowed up the narrow stream, which in some places was hardly a boat's length in width.

The town was reached at last, and a conclave of natives at the landing showed that the runners had done their duty.

"What do they say, Maso?" inquired Holmes, doubtfully surveying the crowd who were shouting wildly in Tagalog.

"They say, 'Come ashore—plenty eat—glad to see strangers,'" interpreted the guide.

The navy-men accordingly disembarked, and followed the interpreter to a large hut built of bamboo and dried grass, where they were told the chief, or *capitan*, as he was called, would receive them.

He soon appeared, with his head tied up in rags, and a frown on his sulky face. Holmes explained that he and his party were envoys from

the *Americanos*, who were friends of the natives, and wished to gain some idea of the interior of the country.

The *capitan* stared at him gloomily, but said nothing in reply.

"Ask him what 's the matter with his head," observed Liddon, more to break the awkward silence than anything else.

The question was put to Maso, and apparently answered by another query.

"He wants to know if you can cure him?"

"Sure," said "Doc" Liddon, confidently. "Tell him I'm a great medicine-man in my own country."

The bandages were removed with haste, and Liddon soon decided that the man was suffering from an acute attack of neuralgia.

"I can fix him," said the ex-medical student after a careful examination. "Just let him send a gang of men down in a big canoe for our provisions and stuff, and I'll give him something that will take the ache out of that face before morning."

Not without some grumbling and suspicious hesitation the men were despatched to the mouth of the river, with a note to the engineer bidding him help the natives in trans-shipping the goods, but to remain at his anchorage until further orders.

In about three hours the canoe returned. Liddon

speedily extracted some gum-camphor from the stores and proceeded to saturate it with alcohol. This was then rubbed on the sick man's head until he fairly squirmed.

"Just as well to have it strong. He 'll respect the medicine-man all the more," remarked the Doctor, as he rubbed away.*

After supper the patient was treated to a dose of laudanum, and all hands retired, the Americans being allotted a comfortable hut for themselves and their belongings.

Next morning the really faithful work of the young physician was apparent. The *capitan* presented himself with a delighted countenance, assuring his visitors that the swelling had gone down (as could readily be seen) and the pain had almost entirely disappeared. He was now ready to provide the party with ponies and guides—with anything, in fact, in his power to give.

The officers joyfully prepared for an early start, when a new trouble appeared.

On going to the entrance of the hut they found a crowd awaiting them. Word had gone through the settlement like wildfire that a wonderful healer had arrived. No sooner had the report spread than all the lame and blind and sick that could crawl or

*See note in Appendix regarding Prof. Carpenter's book on the Philippines.

hobble or be brought to the strangers gathered about their door, beseeching a cure.

It was pitiful to see the poor creatures flocking to the physican for relief, and a mist came over Norman's eyes as he thought of other scenes in a far-off time and country of which he had often read, with his mother and Hallie, from the Book by the home fireside.

Doc Liddon took the situation very practically.

"I'll put in half a day of solid clinical work," said he, "and then we must trot. That is, of course, if you have no objections?" he asked Norman, remembering that he was still in the navy.

"Go ahead, Doc, and do all you can for them in that time. Our orders won't let us stay here any longer."

At it he went accordingly. To some he could do nothing but administer a cooling salve, to others a sleeping draught. Jamaica ginger and quinine were most needed, and were dispensed liberally, a good supply of these "stand-by" medicines fortunately having been taken.

Whitney, as well as Norman himself, proved an able assistant, and an astonishing number of cases were disposed of during the forenoon.

One case in particular touched all three young fellows deeply. An old woman, totally blind, begged that her sight might be restored.

Liddon examined her eyes and found them closed by well developed cataract.

"I can't do it," said he. "Awfully sorry, but it's beyond the power of medicine. Tell her it would have to be cut, Maso."

"Cut, then," said the old woman stoutly.

"I have no knives."

"The one you took from your pocket just now."

"No, it is not the right kind."

The trembling patient could not understand, and, having given place to a mother whose child's arm was out of joint, reappeared a few minutes later with an old cloth bag from which she shook out thirteen big copper pennies, her entire savings.

"Now cut and make me see!" she pleaded, turning her poor old sightless eyes toward the Doctor; and when he again, with utmost gentleness, refused, she gathered up her little hoard and went away sobbing at his hardness of heart.

"I could n't stand this much longer," said Liddon, as he watched her hobbling painfully away. "I suppose a doctor in regular practice gets used to that sort of thing, but——"

He swallowed at a lump in his throat and turned to the next patient, who asked nothing worse than the extraction of a thorn from a festered foot.

At two o'clock, in spite of protests and wailings from the villagers the expedition took its departure.

The provisions were carried on sledges drawn by buffaloes. The ponies, on which the Americans travelled, were half-wild, and gave their riders plenty to think of before night.

"This is a regular broncho! Look at him buck!" cried Whitney at the end of the first mile, as his shaggy little steed bounded into the air and came down stiffly on all four legs with back humped.

"Stick to him, Whit!" called out Liddon. "My Bucephalus does n't buck, but he spends his spare time trying to rub me off on every tree he can find. Whoa, there, Buce!"

Even the stoical natives laughed at the proverbial awkwardness of the sailors, but the latter stuck on, nevertheless, and made good progress. The ponies proved invaluable, after all, showing their good qualities brilliantly when they came to a piece of felled timber. Their method of taking the prostrate trees was certainly peculiar. They did not attempt to leap clear over, but lifted their fore legs, came down on the trunk, balanced a moment, got their fore feet on the ground, and dragged their hind legs after them as best they could.

"Don't you wish you could take the *Olympia* over a shoal like that!" sung out Whitney, as this performance was repeated for the twentieth time.

At nightfall the expedition was well within the

territory of the Mangyans, the wild, uncivilised inhabitants of the interior, whom Norman had been specially charged to investigate.

The scouts halted at a little clump of deserted huts and rested there till morning.

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE FORESTS OF MINDORO.

Word had been sent to the engineer of the launch, before the party left Naujan, to return in just one week and wait for them off the mouth of the river; he in the meantime making the trip back to the squadron with Norman's report to his captain.

"This is great!" exclaimed the "Doctor," as the expedition forced its way farther and farther inland, on the morning of the second day. "I never expected such a good chance to study the vegetation of the tropics. Look at that——"

The cadet interrupted himself with a howl, and made a wild grab at his trousers.

"What 's the matter, Doc?" asked his chum, almost falling off his pony with laughter at the other's motions. Liddon had dismounted some time before and was proceeding on foot, to gain a better knowledge of the *flora* and *fauna* of the strange land through which they were passing.

"I don't know! Something prickly 's crawling up my leg! Ow—wow!"

Off came the trousers, and lo! out fell a good-sized scorpion. Luckily it had not stung him very deeply when he had seized it and so prevented further mischief.

"Oh, for some bottles and alcohol!" moaned the young naturalist, forgetting all about his smarting leg. "What a collection I could make!"

"You 'll come here some time on a Government exploring expedition," said Whitney, still shaking with laughter. "Then you can bottle up all the scorpions and crocodiles you like."

In the afternoon they came suddenly upon an encampment of natives.

"Mangyans," said Maso, as the dusky inhabitants flocked around the strangers.

Norman had been charged to make a special study of this tribe, as representing the uncivilised peoples of the interior of the Philippine Islands. It was quite possible that in the course of events during the next twelvemonth the Mangyans would become American citizens! He therefore determined to make this village his headquarters for the next four or five days, taking such short excursions on foot as would give a good idea of the surrounding country and not lead his party too far from their base of supplies.

The native carriers were at once set to work by Maso, building a permanent camp. It was constructed in the form of an A tent, with bamboo

rafters, interlaced and bound with rattan, and thatched with dry grass and the leaves (or, more properly, *fronds*) of the sago palm.

The Mangyan village comprised eight huts arranged in a semicircle with the largest one in the centre. They were mere platforms of poles, slightly elevated from the ground, with shelters of rattan leaves overhead. This is the dwelling-place of the Mangyans in the dry season, when they wander through the woods by day and camp wherever night overtakes them.

The dress of the women was peculiar, to say the least. Coiled around the waist and hips, they wore a great mass of cord, made by braiding narrow strips of rattan together, and supporting a sort of hanging clout. The cord was stained black, though one or two had a kind woven in alternating black and yellow checks, which Maso said was more highly prized. Beginning with only two or three coils in childhood, Norman was told, they add to it from time to time as they grow older.

"Great scheme for finding out a woman's age," suggested Liddon soberly. "How would it work in the U. S., Whit?"

The only utensils in sight were a few earthen pots; the only weapons rude iron *machetes*, or long, clumsy knives.

The young men found the people good-natured

and as simple as children. That evening they gave a grand entertainment in front of the new tent, by passing about rattles made by putting a few shot in a tin can; and by exhibiting a hand-mirror brought along by Liddon, who was somewhat of a dandy on board ship. His eye-glasses, too, they viewed with the greatest amazement, as he removed them now and then to wipe the lenses. When the mirror was placed in the hands of one of the women, she gazed into it with awe, then looked behind it to see who was peering back at her. Finding nothing, she would grasp at her imaginary double, and chatter away like a monkey with mingled fright and vexation when she clutched nothing but empty air.

One long trip, occupying the best part of two days, was taken inland, to the spurs of a mountain range whose lofty summits could be seen against the western sky.

Taking a light outfit, and accompanied by a Mangyan guide they set out on foot early in the morning. Before long they reached a peculiar tree, with projecting roots like those of the oft-described mangrove. The guide now took a big club and began to strike slow, heavy blows on one of these roots, producing a deep, booming noise that could be heard for miles.

"What in the world is he doing that for?" Norman asked Maso.

"He's 'talking,' he says, to the Mangyans on the mountain, to tell them that white men are coming, and that no harm is meant."

"Beats the 'wigwag' all out," laughed Hugh. "Another idea for the navy, Holmes. Book it!"

The signalling being completed, the party started up the mountain-side. It was hard climbing for the young officers, who were not used to such work. The incline was very steep, and for a part of the way the path lay along trunks of trees, evidently felled by the Mangyans to serve this purpose. They were worn smooth by bare feet and slanted upward at such a sharp angle that it was next to impossible for the white men to walk up them until, after several bad falls, experience helped them to keep their footing. The sun beat down unmercifully, and the expedition was compelled to halt every fifty yards.

The huts of the mountaineers were reached at last, but the occupants had fled, in spite of the guide's friendly signal. It seemed that the old *capitan* had traded with them for twenty years, furnishing them *machetes* and other articles which they needed, in exchange for their wax, honey, and forest gums. They held him in high regard, but his bringing a white man to their clearing a few years before had made them very angry, and they had exacted a promise from him not to repeat the indiscretion. This second approach of a civilised

party alarmed them beyond measure. Fires were burning in their huts but they had taken to the forest, and although the guide "talked" to them by his signals hour after hour, they did not come in.

The largest of the huts was taken for the needs of the expedition. Its floor dimensions were about ten by six, it was perhaps four feet high in the centre and two at the sides. One small opening served for door, window, and chimney.

The clearing contained about twelve acres. The Mangyans had felled the trees, some of them two feet in diameter, with their only tool, the *machete*. The felled timber had been burned, and yams planted in the cleared space, which was surrounded by a rude fence to keep out wild hogs.

The next morning the guide caught the head man of the clearing peering between the tree-trunks, and succeeded in coaxing him in. The others soon followed, and in an hour or two all were on the best of terms. These mountaineers, Norman found, were in every way superior to the lowlanders, but still were a decidedly inferior race. The tallest of the men measured only five feet and one inch in height. Apart from the vegetables and grain which the clearing afforded, they ate certain jungle roots and tubers; also toad-stools, crows, and any other birds they could get, rats, civet-cats, monkeys, snakes, lizards, and fish. Crocodiles they considered a great

luxury, but, they said, they seldom caught them. In hunting they used bows and poisoned arrows, and occasionally managed to bring down a wild hog. Fish and small animals they trapped.

One characteristic of the tribe was especially interesting to Cadet Liddon. When a Mangyan falls seriously ill his relatives and friends run away in fear, abandoning him to his fate. The mountain people return after a time, however, carry the body into the woods, build a bit of fence about it, and cover the little enclosure thus formed with thatch. All the tribe with whom the white men talked denied any belief in a future life.

Various other peculiarities of this strange people were noted down by Norman, to be embodied in his formal report; but we have no space for them here. The party returned to their camp that afternoon, making good time on the descent. The next day they packed up what was left of their provisions and started for the coast. The parting with their new friends was really an affecting one, one dark-skinned lady in particular, to whom Whitney had presented (to her intense delight) two old sleigh-bells, which she at once attached to her scant costume, taking it very hard that they should leave so soon.

On their march to the sea but two noteworthy incidents can be recorded. As they were riding along the path on their ponies, single file, Maso, who was

walking ahead, inadvertently stepped into the ranks of a marching army of ants, which looked like a thick black rope dragging through the jungle. His terrific outcries, as the little creatures swarmed up his ankles, biting savagely with their huge, caliper-like jaws, made the welkin ring again.

Half an hour later, Doc Liddon took his turn at footing it, being on the constant lookout for "the novelties of the season," as he termed the odd plants and insects about him. When advancing down a steep incline he thought he heard a snake hiss, and on turning a rocky corner in the path stopped suddenly. Within six feet of him was a large cobra, with upraised head and expanded hood, coiled to strike. Paralysed with fear, the cadet stood motionless. After a few seconds, which seemed like hours to Hugh, the venomous creature swung to one side and disappeared in a hole among the rocks.

In due time the expedition reached Naujan, whence they dropped down to the sea in the dingey, taking a parting blessing from the *capitan*, who had not forgotten the wonderful cure.

The launch was soon spied, about a mile off-shore; signals brought her close in, and with a long cheer to the natives who had accompanied them down-stream in their canoes, the expedition turned toward what now seemed like home.

The trip to Manila Bay was swift and uneventful. Norman and his party were warmly received by the officers and crew of the *Olympia*, and the report which was made a day or two later was said to have reflected great credit on the scouting expedition. Aguinaldo was already supplied with arms, but Manila was held by the Spaniards as obstinately as ever. Commodore Dewey had become an admiral, and the United States, so the despatches said, was still ringing with his praises.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ENGAGEMENT OFF CARDENAS.

While Norman and his command were exploring the Philippines, Dave Rexdale found plenty to do on the *Eagle*, which was ordered to and fro, always in the vicinity of Cuba, always looking out for a prize or a hostile warship. Now she was bombarding the enemy's coast batteries, now dismantling lighthouses and searching for cables, now landing supplies for the insurgents. There was no idleness on board the little steamer, for whenever active duties on the blockade permitted, drills were the order of the day, and the men were kept constantly on the alert.

Soon after the engagement in which Ensign Bagley lost his life, the *Eagle* returned to Key West, and while there Rexdale ran across one of the crew of the ill-fated *Winslow*, going home on a furlough.

Dave had an interesting talk of an hour or more with this man, and in a letter mailed to Miss Letitia the next day gave an account of it, largely in the man's own words.

William O'Hearn, it seemed, was one of the survivors of the torpedo boat *Winslow's* crew, which passed through the terrible storm of shot and shell that poured in from the Spanish batteries in the bay of Cardenas.

Beside him in a cage was the *Winslow's* parrot, who made himself famous on the day of the battle by shrieking and chattering during the whole engagement.

"He has been mighty quiet since the fight," said O'Hearn, "and I sometimes think the bird is mourning for the boys who were killed. He was very fond of the black cook, Josiah Tunnel, and when the poor fellow lay dying on the deck calling for water, the parrot screamed and shrieked as if he were mad. Tunnel used to feed him every day, and I believe that he actually understands what has happened."

After much questioning O'Hearn told the whole story of the battle.

"From the very beginning," he said, "I think every man on the boat believed that we could not escape being sunk, and that is what would have happened had it not been for the bravery of the boys on the *Hudson*, who worked for over an hour under the most terrific fire to get us out of range."

"Were you ordered to go in there?" asked Dave.

"Yes; just before we were fired upon the order was given from the *Wilmington*."

" Was it a signal order ? "

" No ; we were near enough to the *Wilmington* so that they shouted it to us from the deck, through the megaphone. "

" Do you remember the words of the commander who gave it ? "

" I don't know who shouted the order, but the words, as I remember them, were, ' Mr. Bagley, go in there and see what gunboats there are. ' We started at once toward the Cardenas dock and the firing began soon after. "

" The first thing I saw, " continued O'Hearn, " was a shot fired from a window or door in the second story of the storehouse just back of the dock where the Spanish gunboats were lying. A shell then went hissing over our heads. Then the firing began from the gunboat at the wharf and from the shore. The effect of shell and heavy shot the first time a man is under fire is something terrible.

" First you hear that awful buzzing or whizzing, and then something seems to strike you in the face and head. I noticed that at first the boys threw their hands to their heads every time a shell went over ; but they soon came so fast and so close that it was a roaring, shrieking, crashing hell.

" I am the water-tender, and my place was below, but everybody went on deck when the battle began ; the oiler and the firemen were on watch

with me, and had they remained below they would not have been killed.

"After the firing began I went below again to attend to the boiler, and a few minutes later a solid shot came crashing through the side of the boat and into the boiler, where it exploded and destroyed seventy of the boiler tubes.

"At first it stunned me. When the shell burst in the boiler it threw both the furnace doors open, and the fuse from the shell struck my feet. Two pieces of the shell also came out of the door, and I am taking them home with me as souvenirs of the war.

"It was a terrible crash, and the boiler-room was filled with dust and steam. For several seconds I was partially stunned and my ears rang so I could hear nothing. I went up on the deck to report to Captain Bernadou.

"I saw him near the forecastle gun, limping about with a towel bound about his left leg. He was shouting, and the noise of all the guns was like continuous thunder. 'Captain,' I shouted, 'the forward boiler is disabled. A shell has gone through her.'

"'Get out the hose,' he said, and turned to the gun again. I went back into the boiler-room, and in a few minutes I went up on the deck again and the fighting had grown hotter than ever. Several of the men were missing, and I looked around.

' Lying all in a heap on the afterdeck in the starboard quarter, near the after conning-tower, I saw five of our men where they had wilted down after the shell had struck them.

" In other places were men lying groaning or dragging themselves about.

" The deck was strewn with splinters.

" I went to where the five men were lying and saw that they were not all dead.

" John Meek could speak and move one hand slightly. I put my face down close to his.

" ' Can I do anything for you, John ? ' I said; and he replied, ' No, Tom, I 'm dying; good-by,' and he asked me to grasp his hand.

" ' Go help the rest,' he whispered, gazing with fixed eyes where Captain Bernadou was still firing the forward gun. The next minute he was dead. He was my friend—" and here there was a pause in O'Hearn's story.

" Ensign Bagley," he continued after a while, " was lying at the bottom."

" O'Hearn went on the *Winslow* last January. While on the *Puritan* in the Brooklyn Navy Yard last July, he prevented a catastrophe by saving the ship from being blown up when the boiler-room was on fire. For this act of bravery he was given a medal."

" You see, Aunt Letitia," concluded Dave, " it

is n't all salutes and celebrations and gay flags on board ship as it was when you visited us last year! "

The war had now lasted nearly a month, and the end seemed as far off as ever. The air was full of rumours regarding the whereabouts of Cervera's fleet, which was believed to be heading for Havana. At last news of its arrival at Curaçoa, far to the south of the West Indies, was received. Then it disappeared once more, as if the sea had swallowed it up, and the United States Flying Squadron, under Commodore Schley, closed in upon Cienfuegos, supposing the Spanish ships had taken refuge in that harbour.

The great grey cats, however, watched an empty mouse-hole, for word soon came flying over the wires that Cervera's fleet was in the splendidly protected harbour of Santiago. In some quarters this report was believed, in others it was scoffed at. Everywhere the question was heard, " Where are the Spanish ships ? "

CHAPTER XVII.

CAPTURED BY GUERILLAS.

“ Where are the Spanish ships ? ”

In common with several million of his countrymen, Mr. Frederic O. Larkin asked the question and found no answer. “ Discover the whereabouts of Cervera’s fleet,” telegraphed the *Bulletin*; but how was the enterprising young reporter to find out? The rugged front of Morro Castle and the stern cliffs of the opposite headland blinked at each other across the narrow and winding approach to Santiago harbour, but told no tales.

The suspense was bad enough; but the evident possibility of a tremendous “ beat ” for his paper (and, incidentally, for its war correspondent at the front) was maddening.

The warships cruised restlessly and moodily to and fro before that uncommunicative opening in the coast-line of South-eastern Cuba; and Larkin paced the *Witch’s* abbreviated deck, which allowed him about as much of a promenade as a felon’s cell.

At last he could stand it no longer. "I'll do it!" he exclaimed under his breath. "If I'm caught, I shall be hung as a spy; if I succeed, my fortune's made."

It was a part of his daring plan that no other correspondent on board should know of its conception, lest he should be forestalled. He was aware that a party of Cubans had arrived on board the *New York* that day, and had assured the Admiral that Cervera was in the harbour. The information thus received was deemed almost, but not *absolutely*, reliable. Not a moment was to be lost, if it was to be confirmed by a personal reconnaissance by an American from the fleet; and this was the undertaking which Larkin now set himself to carry out.

Shortly after dark that evening he announced carelessly that he was going over toward the *Yan-kee*, which was manned by a crack body of Naval Reserves from New York.

"Maybe they won't let me on board," he said, "but don't look for me before to-morrow afternoon. I have a friend below decks on that ship."

The other newspaper-men laughed and told him that he would be missed at the mess-table of the *Witch*, at all events. They were so accustomed to his coming and going that when the boat returned without him, an hour later, nothing was thought of it. The two men who rowed had been well paid to

conceal the real purpose of the trip—a shore landing—and evaded all inquiries as to the *Yankee*, which they were supposed to have boarded.

Larkin, meanwhile, was doing his best to gain a safe cover for the night. He had landed at a spot five or six miles west of the Santiago Bay entrance, and having crawled half a mile inland, stretched himself out on the ground and endeavoured to sleep.

After a few hours of broken slumber he roused himself at earliest dawn, and proceeded to breakfast on some hard bread and canned beef which he had taken in his pocket. As he expected to return to the *Witch* before night, he had made no provision for the commissary department of the expedition, beyond this frugal supply. Fortunately he discovered a rivulet of cool water not far from his resting-place, and having taken a long draught, started on his perilous tour, laying his course by a pocket compass.

His main object was to reach the heights overlooking the bay, and so discover the Spanish fleet, if, indeed, it had really taken refuge there.

He had a pair of good field-glasses slung over his shoulder, and he had studied the ships so thoroughly, from descriptions and cuts, that he believed he could identify every one of them, from the *Vizcaya* to the *Cristobal Colon*.

Knowing he had at least a twenty-five-mile walk

before him, he pushed rapidly along through the tangled underbrush, even venturing to follow a well-defined path for some distance. Strange birds fluttered through the boughs over his head, strange vines and creepers entangled his feet, but he kept on at a steady pace along the slope of the Sierra del Cobre, which forms a lofty rampart overlooking the inner bay of Santiago.

The sun rose brightly, and, cheered by its warm rays after his night on the damp earth, he forgot the possible proximity of the enemy so far as to whistle the *Babbie Waltz*, which had run in his head ever since he saw *The Little Minister* in New York, the preceding spring.

He was following the dry bed of a torrent up through a gully in the mountainside, keeping time to snatches of the waltz, his eyes fixed on the ground in front of him, when he heard a crackling of bushes on the edge of the ravine, and glancing upward, looked into the muzzle of a Mauser rifle, pointed directly at his head.

- There was absolutely no cover to run to, the opposite bank being steep and high, and the river-bed itself absolutely exposed to fire above and below the point where he had halted.

"Well, friend," said he, quietly, in English, "you 've got the drop on me this time, sure. What 's wanted?"

An olive-skinned face peered through the bushes behind the rifle. Fred could not resist a cold shudder as he recognised the uniform cap of the Spanish infantry, and realised what his capture meant. He glanced around wildly for means of escape as he spoke.

"*No entiendo d usted,*" said a rough voice. "*Habla usted Español ?*"—"I don't understand you ; do you speak Spanish ?"

"*Algo entiendo y hablo*"—"I understand and speak it a little," returned Larkins, meditating a sudden shot with his revolver, the butt of which he grasped nervously under his coat.

But before he could mature any plan for action the soldier was joined by two others and he was instantly covered by three rifles instead of one.

"Come up here," commanded the first speaker, in his own language. "If you try to escape we shall shoot you."

"I don't doubt it, my friend and neighbour," muttered the reporter between his teeth. "And I'd do the same for you with the greatest pleasure." .

It was of no use to resist or run. He therefore scrambled up the gravelly bank and found himself in the clutches of his captors, who lost no time in going through his pockets, and transferring their contents to their own. While this interesting operation was in progress two more soldiers joined

the company, and an animated dispute arose as to the share of these last comers in the booty. It was with feelings of deepest chagrin that the prisoner saw his revolver and belt go to one of the guerillas, —for such they seemed to be,—his field-glasses to another, the compass to a third, and other minor articles, together with the remainder of his provisions, to the other two.

The order to march was now given, and keeping their prisoner between the first and third man, with a cord binding his wrists and attached to both his guards, the party moved off, striking upward into one of the deepest and darkest defiles of the mountains.

Two hours or more of steady climbing brought the party to the outposts of a camp. It was situated on a small plateau, entirely surrounded by dense forest and watered by a clear mountain stream. The band seemed to be composed of a dozen or fifteen men, who lounged about the rude shelters of boughs and banana leaves which served for tents, and lazily smoked their cigarettes as they leaned upon their muskets and surveyed the prisoner. They were a ragged, wild-looking set, and, although a torn and grimy banner with the arms of Aragon and Castile hung on a pole in the centre of the camp, it was pretty evident that they would not be over-particular as to the nationality or politics of a

prisoner, provided his personal property was worth confiscating.

Tying their captive to a convenient tree, the guerillas now gathered in animated conclave around the smouldering brands of a fire, and discussed the final disposition of the daring spy. Two or three, Larkin understood, were for hanging him without delay; but the man who seemed to be the leader, and who had effected the capture, was in favour of holding him for a ransom. Still another suggested delivering him over to the Spanish authorities at Santiago, but his proposal was voted down with a profusion of Castilian expletives.

Fred's spirits began to rise. He perceived that his chances were far better than if he had fallen in with regular troops, in whose hands his fate would have been certain. It occurred to him that it was time for him to take part in the council.

"Look here," he broke in, forgetting to speak in Spanish, "you fellows will make a bad mistake if you don't notify the fleet that I 'm here, and collect on delivery. There 's big money in it for your crowd, if you manage it just right!"

To his surprise, the leader suddenly remembered his English, and replied:

"What you say? Who pay money?"

"Just send word to Admiral Sampson that I 'm here, and see what the result will be. You don't

know what a prize you 've caught!" He drew himself up haughtily and looked the speaker full in the face.

The men were evidently impressed with the Admiral's name, and all began to talk at once, with the fierce gesticulations of the Southern races.

Larkin caught the name " Rodriguez " repeated several times, and he gathered that his first acquaintance was gaining ground in the argument.

An old woman now approached and began to rake out the fire, chattering peevishly at the men who were in her way. The council dissolved without coming to any definite conclusion, so far as Fred could make out. The woman proceeded to bury a lot of sweet potatoes in the hot ashes, upon which she built up the fire anew. The men languidly polished their muskets and *machetes*, glancing now and then at the *Americano* with no good-will in their evil faces. It was the old story of Spanish procrastination. They could try and, if so decided, execute him later in the day, if not *mañana* (" tomorrow ").

The rays of the sun now beat down with terrific force, and the leader of the bandits, probably from a desire to keep the prisoner in good condition for ransom, pulled Larkin along to a thatched hut nearer the outskirts of the camp, within the shadow of a clump of cocoanut palms. Here he tied him

securely to one of the uprights of the shed, and, half an hour later, brought him a plentiful supply of roasted sweet potatoes and cold water,—an attention highly appreciated by Larkin, who by this time was ravenously hungry.

After dinner the whole band stretched themselves out in the shade to smoke and doze during the heat of the day. One by one their heads dropped on their breasts, leaving no one awake in the camp but a sentinel, who was seated on an elevated platform covered with palm leaves, and who himself seemed half asleep. In the boughs overhead flocks of brilliant-hued parrots screamed and fluttered, their green and scarlet wings gleaming against the blue sky. Fred tugged cautiously at his bonds, but the stout cord only cut into his wrists, which were tied together. The minutes fled and he began to give up the hope which had risen in his breast when he saw his guards yield to the seductions of the afternoon siesta.

A sound of shuffling footsteps close beside him warned him to cease from open attempts to release himself. Turning his head, he saw the withered old crone who had acted as cook for the guerillas. As she paused beside him, gazing covetously at his clothes, a sudden thought struck the prisoner. Just before leaving the *Witch*, Larkin had slipped a five-dollar gold-piece into a diminutive pocket in

the waistband of his trousers for possible use where paper money might fail. The small roll of bills he carried for "emergency expenses" had been at once appropriated by his captors, but they had missed the little out-of-the-way pocket where the coin, which Fred himself had forgotten, lay concealed.

With great difficulty he managed to extract it and exhibit it to the woman, whose eyes glittered at the sight. She instantly made a grab at the gold-piece, but Fred shook his head and made a motion as if about to call the men. She drew back, scowling, and he held up the cord significantly, at the same time showing the edge of the coin.

Without a word she disappeared among the bushes, and Fred's hopes fell to zero as he watched her hobble away.

Presently, however, she reappeared, hurrying up to him with a long, sharp *machete* glistening in her hand. For a minute he did not know whether it was intended for his head or his bonds. She advanced cautiously, and, with a glance wonderfully keen and alert for one of her years at the slumbering guerrillas and lazy sentinel, drew the edge of the shining blade across the cord between his wrists. A quick jerk on his part separated the few strands that were not severed. He was free!

But not out of danger. The old woman waited covetously for the wages she had earned. He knew

she would not willingly betray him, lest he should inform the men of the part she had taken in his attempt at escape, and she should lose her gold-piece. Larkin stretched his cramped limbs, and taking every precaution to avoid even the snapping of a dry twig, crawled out through the back of the shelter, which luckily had no walls, and, beckoning to his sulky liberator to follow, gradually gained the shelter of the woods.

He now rose to his feet and, handing the woman the coin she had well earned, scrambled off through the forest in the general direction of the sea as fast as his legs could carry him. To his dismay, he had not proceeded half a mile when he noticed a sudden gloom and looking up found that a dense bank of clouds, betokening one of the furious thunder-storms which prevail in the tropics, was fast covering the sky. In five minutes, without compass or sun to guide him, he was completely bewildered as to his true course. He was in a high valley, from which the wooded slopes of the hills seemed to rise to equal height on every side. For all he knew, he might blunder straight into the camp of the enemy once more. He now regretted that he had not made a detour and struck the watercourse farther down, by following which he would surely reach the sea.

Darker grew the sky, and he could now hear dis-

tant mutterings of thunder. Still he kept on, stumbling over logs, tripped up by vines, sinking knee-deep into moss-covered crevices. A few great drops of rain came hissing down through the hot air and pattered on the leaves about him. With no thought of giving up, he was plunging ahead when suddenly a network of brush gave way before him and he stumbled head foremost into a small clearing. On its edge stood a thatched hut, in the door of which, at the same moment, a white-bearded man appeared.

"*Qué quiere usted?*"—"What do you want?" said the old man, sternly, picking up a rifle that leaned against the door-post, and stepping out on the threshold. "*Isa, cierre la puerta!*"—"Shut the door!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

CABLE-CUTTING.

During the month of May the Departments at Washington resolved to isolate the Spanish colonies as far as possible from the rest of the world. One of the first acts of Admiral Dewey, after the battle of Manila, was to cut off the telegraph line that led from the capital overland to Cape Bolinao and thence under the sea to Hong-Kong. In the West Indies it was very trying to have the movements of our warships telegraphed in advance from one end of Cuba to the other; nor was it pleasant to know that General Blanco was constantly interchanging messages with Madrid. Orders were issued, therefore, to the various divisions of the blockading squadron to grapple for cables off every important station, and cut without sparing. In the execution of these orders some of the most daring deeds of the war were performed.

Off Santiago the task of carrying out the work fell to the *St. Louis*, a huge converted liner, poorly

armed but manned with splendid officers and crew. One of the naval cadets on the ship, a personal friend of Liddon's, graduating one class ahead of him, was engaged in cable-cutting at about this time, and it is but just to let him tell his story in his own words, as he wrote the account to his family. We trust he will pardon our free use of his letter, which, it is only fair to say, is inserted here without his knowledge.

" U. S. M. S. ' ST. LOUIS,'
NEAR ST. THOMAS, May 23, 1898.

" *Dear Dad:*

" It is the same old yarn. I don't know when I shall have a chance to mail this. I sent you a letter by the *Wampatuck*, but you may never get it, as the chances of her getting captured were rather large when she left us. But to begin where I left off in the last letter: After we left the fleet we went west with the tug in tow, and Monday we lay off Cape Maysi all day. We spent it very pleasantly killing sharks.

" About four we got under way, and at nine were off Santiago de Cuba, of which you might have heard. We heard it was bombarded by the American fleet. A good many people would call me down if I told them what the fleet was composed of. But more of that later.

" We lay to off the above-mentioned place, and

sent the tug in to cut the cable. Beside her regular crew she carried from this ship Captain Goodrich, Mr. Segrave, First Officer; Lieutenant Catlin of the marines; two cadets, Howes and myself; four quartermasters, four seamen, nine marines, and our third officer.

" We steamed in so close that we could hear the soldiers in the fort, got hold of the cable, and had it nearly up, but the tug's winch made such a racket that some patrol boats came to see what it was, and we had to cut and run. In the meantime something had chased the *St. Louis* and it was three in the morning before she picked us up. We lay off all day, and Wednesday the ship herself went in to get the cable, accompanied by the tug.

" We went in slowly at 5 A.M. When two and three-quarters miles off we fired three shots, but as they did not answer we ceased firing. We went steadily in. When about three-quarters of a mile away we got the cable, backed away one-quarter of a mile, the grapnel slipping along the wire, and then started heaving in. The water is very deep here and we had five hundred fathoms of line out. The top of the old fort was black with people watching us all the morning, but nothing happened.

" About 12.15 there came a puff of smoke from the battery and a big shell came screeching over us. Then we let out with our 6-pounders, the forward

nd aft starboard ones only being used. The first shot from the forward gun put a big hole in the fort, and you ought to have seen the brave Hidalgos get off that roof! Lieutenant Catlin took the first shot from the after gun and it dismounted the western gun in the battery. We could see blue things flying in the air which must have been men. Later another gun was dismounted in the same battery. The place got so hot for the gunners that they fled and we had no more trouble with them.

“ The mortar battery was so far back of the hill that it was hard to hit, and every now and then a shot would come screeching over us. Then we contented ourselves with punching holes in the old fort and taking pot-shots at the barracks. The first shot that hit them went through the roof, and the way the troops came piling out was a caution.

“ All this time the tug was banging away, hitting everything in sight. By and by the mortar began to get our range, and shells were dropping all around us. They came as near as twenty feet, but none hit us. Seeing the place was getting so hot, the ship was backed away to three miles out of range, pulling the cable with her.

“ We finally got it up, got one hundred fathoms on deck, and cut it. I have got a piece of the core as a relic. So we and the tug were the fleet! They may have bombarded it since, but that was done on

last Wednesday. If the report is true, the Spanish fleet arrived there that night.

"The next morning we went into Guantanamo to cut another cable, but got fooled. The ground is rather high on the right. We lay quite a way off and the tug went in on the left to cut the wire. All of a sudden a battery of artillery and a regiment of infantry appeared, and both started firing. The tug was hardly one-fourth of a mile away at the time. We opened with our 6-pounders and the tug turned her gatling upon them and they lit out. I had a pair of glasses on them at the time, and I am certain that we got more than a few, as the range was short and our shooting good, and the gatling is good for two miles.

"But in a few minutes four gunboats showed up, and as their guns were heavier than ours, though their marksmanship was poor, we decided to light out. I am certain that one of our shells landed on one of them, because shortly after that shot she listed over badly and put back.

"We scouted round Friday and Saturday morning and broke a cable from Cuba outside the three-mile limit of Hayti. We sent the tug in with despatches. When she came back we gave her our mail, and she started for Key West. Just as she got out of sight a large cruiser came around the point, going full speed. We headed for her, trying to throw a bluff

but it did not work, and so we came about, shook up the fires, and lit out at a 23-knot gait, she after us. But it is a good ship that catches the *St. Louis*, and we soon left her.

“ Later we fell in with the *St. Paul*. It made us feel homesick to look at her battery. If we had it there would n't be any Santiago left. When we told them who it was that did the bombarding they as much as called us liars. I don't know as they believe it yet. She has six 5- or 6-inch guns, and I don't know how many 3- and 6-pounders,—about eighteen, I guess.

“ We told them about the cruiser chasing us in the morning, and they started to look for her.

“ Yesterday morning we showed up off Ponce, Porto Rico. They stuck up a white flag on the lighthouse. Whether it was a signal or whether they did not want to be fired on I don't know. There was a big camp of infantry on the hills, but we saw no signs of artillery. The bottom was very rocky, and we bent two grapnels out, so we gave it up as a bad job.

“ We came into St. Thomas this morning, got a telegram, sent one, and got out. While there we heard of the bombardment of Santiago,—only the report said that the whole fleet was there; that the *Machias* was sunk; that the *Harvard* was cooped

up in Martinique; also that the Santiago cable had been 'out of order' for the last few days.

"The *Minneapolis* was in there for coal Friday night. The *Journal* despatch boat was chased six hours, but got in all right.

"Well, I have been under fire twice, and if they were not such poor shots I would n't be writing this. A big target of a merchant ship and a bit of a tug silencing one battery, dismounting another, and having their own way generally in front of a strongly fortified town! It beats everything for cheek.

"I think we'll get more guns soon. In fact we have got to have them if we stay round these waters long.

"HARRY."

With this brief digression we will leave the coast and turn our attention to the little clearing among the hills where Antonio Cueva stands facing poor Fred Larkin, gun in hand.

CHAPER XIX.

ANTONIO AND ISABELLA.

Fred Larkin looked into the old man's face and decided to trust him.

"I am a fugitive," he gasped, in the best Spanish he could muster. "The guerillas are after me, and if I am caught——"

"Come in," said Cueva, waiting to hear no more, and opening the door, which had been closed by someone within. "I am an Andalusian, and no one who appeals to me for shelter shall be turned away."

Larkin caught the import of his words, and at any rate understood the gesture with which they were accompanied. He gladly availed himself of the old Spaniard's invitation and entered.

As the door closed behind them a vivid flash of lightning glittered through the small windows, then left them in almost total darkness, and was followed by a terrific crash, like a discharge of artillery, which made the very walls shake.

"*Suena el trueno*," said Cueva, calmly. "*Un rayo ha caído*"—"A thunderbolt has fallen." "Isa, a light for the stranger! *Señor, tiene usted hambre?*"

"Thanks," said Fred, drawing a long breath, as he listened to the rush of the storm outside, "I'm not hungry. The soldiers gave me food."

At this moment a footstep was heard returning from an inner room, and a light appeared. Fred looked up curiously, and then, with the instinct of American training, jumped from the stool on which he had seated himself at his host's request and bowed low.

He saw a young girl of eighteen or thereabouts—advancing with a small lamp, the light of which fell full on her face. Her beautiful dark eyes were fixed on the stranger with eager curiosity, while with her free hand, the daintiness of which many a fine lady might envy, she pushed back the locks of jet-black hair that escaped from the simple ribbon with which they had been confined.

"*Bienvenido sea Usted, señor!*"—"Welcome, sir"—said a musical voice, as the dark-eyed maiden curtsied and placed the lamp on the table.

"It is my daughter, Isabella," said Cueva, shortly, as Larkin gazed at her with frank admiration. "Now, sir, will you tell me your story? The soldiers will not move until the storm is past."

Resume your seat, or, rather, let us draw it up to the fire."

Nothing loath, the reporter took the place indicated by the hospitable Spaniard, who sat down on the opposite side of the fireplace, Isabella, after a slight hesitation, drawing a stool for herself to her father's side.

Larkin deemed it best, under the circumstances, to make a clean breast of his errand.

"My countrymen," he explained, "were not sure that the fleet of Admiral Cervera was in the harbour of Santiago. I am a—a—" He paused for a Spanish word to express "reporter," when the girl spoke once more.

"My father understand leetle English," said she, smiling, "and I, too, understand leetle more. When *mio padre* not comprehend, I will say it in *Castigliano*. You can speak English, if you will say it *very* slow to me."

"Ah, that's good!" exclaimed Fred with satisfaction. "Now we can get on. As I—was—saying—I—am—a—reporter—writer, you know [as his hosts looked puzzled]—for the *Boston Daily Bulletin*—and it occurred—to me that it would be a big thing if I could get ashore and find out for myself——"

He had by this time completely forgotten the injunction to "say it very slow," and was running on

at a great rate, when Isa threw up her little hands in despair, laughing at the same time.

So Fred began again, and with an occasional Spanish phrase to help him out got on very well with his story.

As they talked the wind shook the little hut to its foundations, the rain dashed in floods upon its roof and walls, and the thunder roared grandly. Although the earlier part of the day had been so warm, the storm brought coolness, and the three inmates of the little shelter were glad to draw closely around the fire which Isa fed from time to time with dry sticks from the neighbouring forest. Fred felt as if he were in a dream, in some weird fairy tale of the Arabian Nights; and in a pause of his story he ventured to say as much to his young hostess. "And Señorita Isabella is the good fairy," he added, with a pleasant glance at her and another at his own torn and stained clothing.

"Ah, no," said she, laughing merrily, and then becoming very grave. "I am no fairy, but a poor, unhappy Spanish girl, far, far from home. My father is with me," and she laid her cheek affectionately against his shoulder, "but my brother, ah, my brother is lost for ever!"

"How is that?" inquired Fred.

A tear stole slowly down from the girl's dark eye.

" We left him in Spain eight years ago, and we have never heard from him."

" What was his name and address ? " asked the reporter, taking out his note-book with a business-like air.

The girl shook her head sadly. " You could never find him, señor. His name was Pedro—Pedro Cueva "; and she described the little Andalusian village in the borders of which they had lived.

Fred wrote rapidly, and then, with a droll look into her eyes, showed her the page. She held it up to the lamplight and scrutinised it with a puzzled look in her pretty face.

" What ees it ? Not English ! Not Spanish ! "

" Yes, it 's English, but ' shorthand, ' " laughed Fred. " There 's no special hurry just now, but I used it from habit. " And he explained to her, as well as he could, the system which has revolutionised newspaper work and made verbatim reporting possible in modern times.

She gave the book back with a little pout.

" I do not like it, " she said. " I never could tell what it ees you write. "

" See, señorita, here is your name. "

Handwritten shorthand consisting of three symbols: a stylized 'A' with a dot, a 'C' with a dot, and a 'U' with a dot.

He dashed off the queer little wriggles and dots, and handed the book to her.

" May I have it ? " she asked after a moment.

" Sure," said Fred, who could n't quite get rid of his slang on short notice.

He tore out the page and gave it to her with an exaggerated bow. She took the folded bit of paper and put it away carefully in her dress.

" Now you can show that—— "

" And say it ees my *fairy* name, ees it not ? "

The older man had remained silent and watched the young people's fun with an abstracted air, as if his thoughts were far away. Now he roused himself and went to the window.

" The storm has spent its strength," said he in his own tongue, as he returned to the fireside, " but the rain will last for hours. You must be our guest to-night, señor."

The reporter was sorry to risk his chance of a " scoop " by a day's time, but it cannot be said that it was with unmixed regret that he resigned himself to the inevitable. Isabella was evidently pleased with the break in the sad, monotonous life of the exiled family, and frankly showed her enjoyment of the cheerful young American's society. She talked of Spain and her childhood days among the olive trees by the Guadalquivir, and of the privations she and her father had undergone in Cuba. Larkin, on the other hand, told her of the old Bay State, of Boston and its homes, and of his friends

there and on the warships. They agreed that the war would soon be over, and then—— ?

“ And then,” said Fred, cheerfully, “ I ’m coming to pay you and your father a visit. Perhaps you ’ll come to Boston some time. It ’s the best city in the world, you know! Ah, if I could have just one good plate of baked beans! ”

The girl forgot her own sorrows in laughing at him. Antonio dozed in his chair. The rain drummed steadily on the roof and the day waned.

The conversation came round to the insurgents, and presently Isabella made some reference to Rodriguez and his company.

“ Rodriguez ? ” exclaimed Fred, pricking up his ears. “ They mentioned somebody of that name while they were holding their court-martial this noon.”

The girl looked troubled. “ He is a bad man,” she said, glancing toward the window. “ He is an insurgent, but I believe he goes to the Spanish camp. I am sure I saw him in Santiago the very last time I was there.”

“ It may not be the same one. Perhaps there are two Dromios.”

She did not understand his allusion, but she caught his meaning, and frowned.

“ It *is* the same one, I am sure. He often comes here, and if he could gain anything by betraying

you to General Linares he would do it—*so* quick!" She snapped her fingers and her eyes sparkled.

" You don't like him ? "

" No! " Her tone was full of scorn and dislike. " He is too bold. He—he—— "

" He likes you, perhaps ? "

Isabella turned her face away. " I do not wish to talk about him. See, I must prepare the supper. "

She sprang up with a peculiar little gesture of her hands as if she were throwing away the subject, and set about her preparations for the meal in good earnest.

Larkin watched her with an amused smile.

" Poor show for Rod," he said to himself. Then, with a graver look in his face, " That girl deserves a first-class man, if she ever marries. I wonder—— " He looked at the fire and mused a little.

The girl was busily passing to and fro in the room, when she happened to glance out of the window. It was already dusk, but she caught sight of a dark form coming up the mountain trail, fifty yards below.

Hardly stifling a cry, she flew to her guest's side and caught his arm.

" He comes! he comes! " she cried. " Father, it 's Rodriguez! He will see the señor and betray

him! Oh, what shall we do!" and she fairly wrung her hands in despair.

Fred was on his feet in a moment and his hand went instinctively to his side. But he was weaponless. He clenched his fist. "Ah, they've got my revolver!"

"*Quieto!*" said the old man. "*No hable Usted tan tanto!*"—"Do not speak so loud! Here, mount the table and climb!"

He pointed to a small loft or flooring of loose boards overhead.

Fred, who was a muscular fellow, was up there in a moment and stretched at full length on the boards. He was none too quick. There was a knock at the door.

"*Alguno llama,*" said the old man, who had instantly resumed his seat. "*Isa, vaya Usted ver quien es*"—"Some one knocks. Go and see who it is."

Isabella reluctantly opened the door.

"*Como estd, seńorita?*" said a rough voice, and without waiting for an invitation a burly, coarse-faced fellow swaggered in. "*Hace un tiempo espantoso*"—"It's beastly weather"—he continued, shaking the drops from his hat. "May I dry myself at your fire, Seńor Antonio?"

"*Sí, seńor,*" replied Cueva, coldly. "What is the news?"

"The latest news," said the new-comer, as he took the seat so lately vacated by Larkin, who was at that minute glaring down at him through a crack, some five feet overhead, "is that a Yankee pig has been captured not far from here and was to be hung as a spy, but escaped just before the storm broke."

"Who captured him? Not your men, surely, for you should befriend an American."

"*Va!* All are fish that come into my net. I hate these Northern pigs who come here to take the island from us. They are worse than the old rulers. If they had left us alone we would have conquered Santiago, Cienfuegos, and Havana next month. *Va!* You have seen nothing of this *Americano*, I suppose, señor?" he continued, looking sharply at the other from beneath his bushy black eyebrows.

"I can tell you nothing of him," said the old man with dignity. "But if I should see him to-morrow and he should ask my protection, it would be granted, be he friend or foe."

"Your protection!" sneered the captain of infantry; then, changing his tone, with a long look at pretty Isa, who had withdrawn as far as possible from him,— "but we will not quarrel. This spy will be captured to-morrow—he can't have gone far in this storm—and then we can decide what to do with him. Perhaps I shall send him under guard

to General Garcia, who will give him a warm welcome."

"Or to General Linares," added Antonio, quietly.

Rodriguez started savagely, and opened his mouth to reply to this home thrust, but thought better of it. Swallowing his confusion and wrath, he drew from under his coat a navy revolver and well-filled cartridge-belt, and placed them on the table.

"At least you will let me leave these here overnight for safe-keeping," he said, with an effort. "They were taken from the prisoner and came into my hands. I have my own weapons, and these will be spoilt by the rain if I carry them about.

"*Si, señor,*" said Cueva, carelessly. "Isa, put these away where they will be safe from the fire. See, you can stand on the table and place them up on the board there."

Isa started forward, but the captain was too gallant to allow her to do this. With some difficulty he climbed clumsily upon the table and held up the revolver and ammunition. There was a breathless moment of suspense for the girl while he felt about the edge of the opening and deposited them within a foot of Larkin's head.

"There they 'll be safe till to-morrow," he said, as he dismounted clumsily from the table. "One

can always leave his valuables with you, señor, and rely on their being returned in good condition to the owner."

Antonio nodded gravely. "The owner shall have them whenever he wishes."

CHAPTER XX.

THE TRAITOR.

For reasons best known to himself, Mr. Martin Stevens—still nominally in the naval service, for although through pretended illness he had obtained a furlough and had sent in his resignation, the latter had not been accepted—thought best not to display his uniform prominently during his brief stay at Magnolia. He was boarding at a private house on the Point, and was often seen by the old-time inhabitants of "Lobster Lane" in company with an olive-faced gentleman who rarely engaged in conversation with the townspeople, for the very good reason that he evidently knew but little English. This "Dago," as he was called by the fishermen, took pains to have it understood, as did Stevens himself, that he was an Italian of gentle birth, who was spending the summer on the Eastern seaboard in search of health.

These two gentlemen showed great interest in the antiquities as well as the natural features of the sur-

rounding country. They were enthusiastic over the Chasm, the Flume, "Kettle Cove," and the beauties of forest and shore, which the foreigner was assiduous in photographing.

One day they went to Gloucester, and stopping at the "Park," were soon on good terms with the detachment of artillery stationed there. They walked over the grounds with the commanding officer, commended the drill, and (Stevens, of course, doing most of the talking, and interpreting for his friend, whom he called Mr. Toscani) asked innumerable questions concerning not only the fortifications at that place, but the coast defences north and south of Gloucester.

On reaching the city above referred to, after a couple of hours at the Camp, they engaged a boat and rowed out to the monitor, then anchored in the harbour and open to the public. Here again their plausible address and pleasant manners secured them an agreeable welcome at the outset. But when the executive officer of the ship began on his part to inquire about Stevens's status in the navy and pressed his questions home, a coolness sprang up between host and guests, and the latter departed, "Mr. Toscani" slipping a small note-book back into an inner pocket as they did so.

"Why you go so soon?" demanded that gentleman, angrily, as the two stepped on the wharf.

"The exec. was asking awkward questions, confound him," growled his companion. "He was suspicious, too, when he caught you taking notes. I tell you, José, you take too much risk. Suppose he had seen that camera!"

"It is too leetle," grinned José, speaking with a strong Spanish accent and patting his pocket. "I 'ave some ver' goot photograph here. Dey are small, but true."

"Well, come along, and keep your 'bull's-eye' out of sight. There 's nothing more to see here. To-morrow we go to the Shoals, and then our work 's done in this part of the country. Are all those exposures of the South Shore developed?"

The dark-skinned man nodded vehemently several times. "Develop and printed. They come out bee-cautiful, except one of—w'at you call him?—Swam—Swam——"

"Swampscott—I know," returned Martin, impatiently. "Don't talk so loud. Now then, jump in, and we 'll get back to the Point and pack up. You can mail the prints of Grover's Cliff, Point Allerton, and the rest to Montreal from Salem, where we change cars to-morrow."

Early the next morning the two men took the train toward Boston, changed at Salem, and rode to Portsmouth, where they took steamer for Apple-dore. They remained on the island only three

days, during which time Toscani, or José, to call him by his real name, which was José Rios, was assiduous in his photographing, paying special attention to the Government station on the summit of the island.

While Rios was securing all the information possible at the Shoals, Stevens slipped up to Portsmouth, where he accomplished satisfactorily to himself two tasks. One was to observe with as much accuracy as local regulations would permit the defences of the Kittery Navy Yard; the other, to receive by post from Montreal an envelope containing a substantial remittance from some unknown benefactor in that city. This done, and the photographing completed, the two men disappeared from New England. Rios, it may be added, sailed from Montreal for Europe in company with a well-known Spanish representative two weeks later, and with his subsequent career we are not concerned. His photographs and notes now undoubtedly form a part of the bulky documents and archives of the Secret Service at Madrid, where dark-eyed officials have discussed the various coves and harbours of our home shores, pronouncing in strange and uncouth accent the names of promontory and bay familiar to our childhood.

Martin Stevens went to New York, and from there direct to Tampa. He bore in the lining of

his vest an unsigned promise, in terms that would puzzle an outsider, of large emolument for certain services—referred to but not described—to be paid, on their performance, by the branch of the Royal Bank at Havana. There was also a letter, in Spanish cipher, introducing the bearer to Governor-General Blanco.

It seemed, however, that that city was not the traitor's immediate destination. He boarded a steamer for Kingston, giving out that he was an Englishman of leisure engaged in studying the war from an insular standpoint. He had now entirely discarded his naval uniform, and assumed a dress suited to the part he was playing. He shaved off his moustache, cultivated a new growth of side-whiskers, and sported an eye-glass.

From Kingston, where his identity was not suspected, he made his way across the island to Falmouth, about one hundred and fifty miles from Capo de Cruz, and the same distance from Santiago, on the south-east shore of Cuba.

One dark night a small, sharp-prowed schooner left Jamaica and sped northward across the fifty leagues that separate the two islands. Twenty-four hours later she hove to off the entrance of the bay at the head of which Caimanera is situated. A boat dropped from her side, containing three passengers who were set ashore on the western point. The

dingy returned to the schooner, which came about and headed southward once more.

Stevens, with his two conductors who knew the country thoroughly, made his way westward. They came upon an insurgent camp, and, proclaiming that they were Americans on a scout, were hospitably entertained and passed along. Two days afterward they were within the walls of the governor's palace in Santiago.

Shortly after the departure of Stevens from Florida rumours gained credence that a Spanish spy had been working the New England coast for valuable information regarding defences and batteries; that a nest of spies had been unearthed in Canada, and that the British Government, on being notified thereof, had given the suspected individuals three days' notice for leaving the country. Detectives were sent to all important points from Newport to Quoddy Head, but no spies were caught save one in Florida, who on the first night of his imprisonment hanged himself in his cell.

The war was prosecuted with greater energy than ever. Word was flashed over the country that it had been established beyond a doubt that Cervera's fleet was in the harbour of Santiago. One Lieutenant Blue, unconscious of poor Larkin's failure and proximity, landed on the Cuban shore and in a re-

connoitring expedition, conducted with the greatest bravery, actually saw the Spanish warships at anchor in the harbour. They had successfully eluded the powerful American squadron and, closely pressed, had taken refuge in the friendly port—the last, it proved, that they ever should enter.

Rexdale, on the *Eagle*, was growing impatient. He longed to take a more active part in hostilities and was talking the matter over with Tickerson one bright afternoon early in June, on the blockade off Matanzas, when he was summoned to the room of the commander and notified that he was detached from the *Eagle* and ordered to the *Oregon*, which had just arrived off Santiago. Nothing could have given the ensign greater delight, for the wonderful achievements of the great battleship of the West were the talk of the navy. Nor had he long to wait for transhipment.

On June 14th the *Eagle* left Key West with a convoying squadron under command of Captain Taylor and proceeded to the vicinity of the Dry Tortugas. On the night of the 15th she joined the division convoying the troops of the United States, now actually on the move, after long and tiresome delays, to invade Cuba. On the 20th the whole fleet arrived off Santiago, and Dave, bidding good-by to his old friend and his comrades on the *Eagle*, was sent over to the *Oregon*, where he soon made him-

self at home. Two days afterward came the memorable landing of the army at Daiquiri.

In carrying the record of Rexdale's movements up to this point, however, we have anticipated the regular course of events, one of which is too important to be omitted and must have a chapter for itself.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOBSON'S CHOICE.

As soon as it was definitely ascertained that the six Spanish men-of-war were in the harbour of Santiago the efforts of the United States Navy were concentrated upon two objects: first, to prevent the enemy's torpedo boats from stealing out under cover of darkness and inflicting injury upon our own ships; and, second, to keep the hostile fleet cooped up within the harbour.

A cyclone, it was said, such as are common in West Indian latitudes, might disperse the blockaders; or the torpedo boats might do us incalculable damage,—for here, again, the *Maine* was remembered. The commanding officers of the fleet held consultation after consultation, and as a result the plan of Lieut. Richard Pearson Hobson, an 1889 graduate of the Naval Academy, was adopted. This was nothing less than to sink a large vessel in the narrowest part of the channel leading into the harbour, and so effectually obstruct navigation; in other words, "cork the bottle."

The morning of June 3d was chosen as the time for this perilous undertaking. Volunteers had been called for, and four hundred men eagerly offered their services. Only seven were chosen, in addition to the daring young officer: two from the *New York*, one from the *Iowa*, two from the *Massachusetts*, and three from the *Brooklyn*. The vessel selected as a sacrifice was the collier *Merrimac*, which was a large and expensive ship, but had been a source of great trouble, as her engines were constantly getting out of order. She had discharged nearly all her cargo of coal, and the Admiral considered that she would be more useful under than upon the water.

It was a dark, foggy morning. Cadet Joseph Powell, who had nearly as dangerous a part to play as that of the principal actors, was on deck after midnight. He says:

“Lieutenant Hobson took a short sleep for a few hours, which was often interrupted. At 1.45 he came on deck and made a final inspection, giving his last instructions. Then we had a little lunch. Hobson was as cool as a cucumber.

“About 2.30 I took into the launch the men who were not going on the trip and started for the *Texas*, the nearest ship, but had to go back for one of the assistant engineers, whom Hobson finally compelled to leave. I shook hands with Hobson the last of

all. He said: 'Powell, watch the boat's crew when we pull out of the harbour. We will be cracks, rowing thirty strokes to the minute.'

"After leaving the *Texas* I saw the *Merrimac* steaming slowly in. It was only fairly dark then and the shore was quite visible. We followed about three-quarters of a mile astern.

"The *Merrimac* stood about a mile to the westward of the harbour and seemed a bit mixed; turning completely around, finally, heading to the east, she ran down and then turned in. We were then chasing him because I thought Hobson had lost his bearings.

"When Hobson was about two hundred yards from the harbour the first gun was fired from the eastern bluff.

"We were then half a mile offshore, close under the batteries. The firing increased rapidly. We steamed in slowly and lost sight of the *Merrimac* in the smoke which the wind carried offshore. It hung heavily. Before Hobson could have blown up the *Merrimac* the western battery picked us up and commenced firing. They shot wild and we only heard the shots. We ran in still closer to the shore, and the gunners lost sight of us. Then we heard the explosion of the torpedoes on the *Merrimac*."

On the *Merrimac* the eight men were standing

at their posts with every nerve strained to the utmost.

On either side of the unarmoured hull were the Spanish gunners pouring in their fire, and the shots at that short range, with the light-laden *Merrimac* standing out of water, began to tell. Shot after shot came whizzing over the deck, scores went through the hull, but fortunately above the water-line. Ahead, anchored near the Cayo Smith Island, the cruiser *Reina Mercedes*, turned broadside toward the narrow passage, worked her small guns rapidly upon the encroaching Yankee ship. One of the torpedo boats and a destroyer, which had been scouting near the harbour entrance, brought their rapid-fire guns into play, and the projectiles fell all about the *Merrimac* as she steadily but slowly made her way through the passage.

Another line of torpedoes was passed and none exploded. The shower of artillery fire from the heights on either side, and the spitting of the small-arms on the torpedo boats, kept up with increasing vigour. The Spaniards were getting the range and shots were taking effect, but still the *Merrimac* was going farther into the enemy's harbour.

If the engines could be worked a little longer the task would be complete. As the amazed Spaniards kept up their fire the *Merrimac* was seen to slowly swing. Her bow gradually turned toward Morro

until it looked as if she was either injured or was making an absurd attempt to work around and get out. But she was attempting nothing of the sort.

When the steamer had been swung about half around she stopped, and there was a splash as the heavy anchor went plunging down into the mud. Almost instantly there was a report and the big ship shivered as the water boiled about her. Then she careened, and the big lead-coloured hull began to disappear with a sudden lurch forward.

A few moments and the aperture in the plating near the bow was apparent from the movements of the ship, for she dove almost perpendicularly, it seemed, beneath the waves. Lieutenant Hobson had turned on the current, the torpedo had crashed through the steel hull, and the task was completed. The men, stripped to the waist, leaped overboard. A ship's float, or "catamaran," lay on the midship house of the *Merrimac* and was tied by a slack line to the taffrail.

A month later Lieutenant Hobson described the further experiences of himself and his men as follows:

"I swam away from the ship as soon as I struck the water, but I could feel the eddies drawing me backward in spite of all I could do. That did not last very long, and as soon as I felt the tugging cease, I turned and struck out for the float, which

I could see dimly bobbing up and down over the sunken hull.

“ The *Merrimac*'s masts were plainly visible, and I could see the heads of my seven men as they followed my example and made for the float also. We had expected, of course, that the Spaniards would investigate the wreck, but we had no idea they would be at it as quickly as they were. Before we could get to the float several rowboats and launches came around the bluff from inside the harbor. They had officers on board, and armed marines as well, and they searched that passage, rowing backward and forward, until the next morning. It was only by good luck that we got to the float at all, for they were upon us so quickly that we had barely concealed ourselves when a boat with quite a large party on board was right beside us.

“ Unfortunately, we thought then,—but it turned out afterward that nothing more fortunate could have happened to us,—the rope with which we had secured the float to the ship was too short to allow it to swing free, and when we reached it we found that one of the pontoons was entirely out of the water and the other one was submerged. Had the raft lain flat on the water we could not have got under it, and would have had to climb upon it, to be an excellent target for the first party of marines that arrived. As it was, we could get under the

raft, and, by putting our hands through the crevices between the slats which formed its deck, we could hold our heads out of water and still be unseen. This is what we did, and all the rest of the night we stayed there with our noses and mouths barely out of the water.

“None of us expected to get out of the affair alive, but luckily the Spaniards did not think of the apparently damaged, half-sunken raft floating about beside the wreck. They came to within a cable’s length of us at intervals of only a few minutes. We could hear their words distinctly, and even in the darkness could distinguish an occasional glint of light on the rifle-barrels of the marines and on the lace of the officer’s uniforms.

“We were afraid to speak above a whisper, and for a good while, in fact whenever they were near us, we breathed as easily as we could. I ordered my men not to speak unless to address me, and with one exception they obeyed.

“After we had been there an hour or two the water, which we had found rather warm at first, began to get cold, and my fingers ached where the wood was pressing into them. The clouds, which were running before a pretty stiff breeze when we went in, blew over, and then by the starlight we could see the boats when they came out of the shadows of the cliffs on either side, and even when

we could not see them we knew that they were still near, because we could hear very plainly the splash of the oars and the grinding of the oar-locks.

“ Our teeth began to chatter before very long, and I was in constant fear that the Spaniards would hear us when they came close. It was so still that the chattering sound seemed to us as loud as a hammer, but the Spaniards’ ears were not sharp enough to hear it. We could hear sounds from the shore almost as distinctly as if we had been there, we were so close to the surface of the water, which is an excellent conductor, and the voices of the men in the boat sounded as clear as a bell. My men tried to keep their teeth still, but it was hard work, and not attended with any great success at the best.

“ We all knew that we would be shot if discovered by an ordinary seaman or a marine, and I ordered my men not to stir, as the boats having officers on board kept well in the distance. One of my men disobeyed orders and started to swim ashore, and I had to call him back. He obeyed at once, but my voice seemed to create some commotion among the boats, and several of them appeared close beside us before the disturbance in the water made by the man swimming had disappeared. We thought it was all up with us then, but the boats went away into the shadows again.

“ There was much speculation among the Span-

yards as to what the ship was and what we intended to do next. I could understand many of the words, and gathered from what I heard that the officers had taken in the situation at once, but were astounded at the audacity of the thing. The boats, I also learned, were from the fleet, and I felt better, because I had more faith in a Spanish sailor than I had in a Spanish soldier.

“ When daylight came a steam-launch full of officers and marines came out from behind the cliff that hid the fleet and harbour and advanced towards us. All the men on board were looking curiously in our direction. They did not see us. Knowing that some one of rank must be on board, I waited till the launch was quite close and hailed her.

“ My voice produced the utmost consternation on board. Every one sprang up, the marines crowded to the bow, and the launch's engines were reversed. She not only stopped, but she backed off until nearly a quarter of a mile away, where she stayed. The marines stood ready to fire at the word of command when we clambered out from under the float. There were ten of the marines and they would have fired in a minute had they not been restrained.

“ I swam towards the launch and then she started towards me. I called out in Spanish, ‘ Is there an officer on board ? ’ An officer answered in the

affirmative, and then I shouted in Spanish again, 'I have seven men to surrender!' I continued swimming, and was seized and pulled out of the water.

"As I looked up when they were dragging me into the launch, I saw it was Admiral Cervera himself who had hold of me. He looked at me rather dubiously at first, because I had been down in the engine-room of the *Merrimac*, where I got covered with oil, and that, with the soot and coal-dust, made my appearance most disreputable. I had put on my officer's belt before sinking the *Merrimac*, as a means of identification, no matter what happened to me, and when I pointed to it in the launch the Admiral understood and seemed satisfied. My treatment by the naval officers and that of my men also was courteous all the time that I was a prisoner. They heard my story, as much of it as I could tell, but sought to learn nothing more.

"Sharks? No, we did n't have time to think of them that night. We saw a great many things, though, and went through a great many experiences. When we started out from the fleet I tied to my belt a flask of medicated water, supplied to me by my ship's surgeon. The frequency with which we all felt thirsty on the short run into the passage and the dryness of my mouth and lips made me believe that I was frightened. The men felt the same, and all the way the flask went from hand to hand. Once

I felt my pulse to see if I was frightened, but to my surprise I found it normal."

The subsequent adventures of these eight heroic men are known to every reader of the daily papers during that fateful summer of 1898. The prisoners were at first confined in Morro Castle, but afterward transferred to the city.

"The windows in the side of our cell in Morro," said Lieutenant Hobson, in describing this part of his perilous trip, "opened west across the harbour entrance, and we could hear and see the shells as they struck. We knew that we would not be fired upon, as word had gone out as to where we were, so we sat at the window and watched the shells. Each one sang a different tune as it went by. The smaller shells moaned or screeched as they passed, but the 13-inch shells left a sound behind them like that of the sudden and continued smashing of a huge pane of glass. The crackling was sharp and metallic, something like sharp thunder without the roar, and the sound continued, but decreased, after the shell had gone. In many instances the shells struck projecting points of rock, and, ricochetting, spun end over end across the hills. The sound they made as they struck again and again was like the short, sharp puffs of a locomotive starting with a heavy train."

Meanwhile Admiral Cervera, exhibiting the true

spirit of old-time Spanish chivalry, sent a flag of truce to Admiral Sampson with the following message:

“Admiral Cervera, the Commander of the Spanish fleet, is most profoundly impressed with the brilliant courage shown by the men who sank the steamer *Merrimac* in our harbour, and in admiration of their courage he has directed me to say to their countrymen that they are alive, and with the exception of two of the men who were slightly hurt, they are uninjured. They are now prisoners of war, and are being well cared for, and will be treated with every consideration.”

It should be added that Naval Cadet Powell had carried out with splendid coolness and bravery the part he had been given to perform. All night long he kept his launch under heavy fire, hoping to rescue Hobson and his comrades.

“Until daylight,” he said in his modest account of the affair, “we waited just outside the breakers, half a mile to the westward of Morro, keeping a bright lookout for the boat or for swimmers, but saw nothing. Hobson had arranged to meet us at that point, but thinking that some one might have drifted out we crossed in front of Morro and the mouth of the harbour to the eastward.

“About five o’clock we crossed the harbour again within a quarter of a mile and stood to the west-

ward. In passing we saw one spar of the *Merrimac* sticking up out of the water. We hugged the shore just outside of the breakers for a mile and then turned toward the *Texas*, when the batteries saw us and opened fire. It was then broad daylight. The first shot dropped thirty yards astern, but the others went wild.

"I drove the launch for all she was worth, finally making the *New York*."

Some weeks later Lieutenant Hobson and his men, exchanged for Spanish prisoners in our lines, were received with acclamations of joy by the troops besieging Santiago, and by the officers and crews of the fleet to which they returned unhurt.

CHAPTER XXII.

A PRISONER OF WAR.

To the relief of all concerned, Rodriguez did not delay his departure long after he had deposited his booty for safe-keeping. The storm was evidently abating, and the officer took his leave.

"If you see anything of the Yankee, it would be best"—he bent a meaning and half-threatening glance upon Cueva—"to let us know. He would not be badly treated if he should be captured, Don Antonio. He could either be held in Santiago for exchange, or in these mountains for a large ransom from his friends. A part of the money might come your way—who knows?" he added, with a leer that was meant to be winning, in Isa's direction.

The old man watched the retreating form of the soldier with varied expression; satisfaction at the departure of the unwelcome guest mingling in his stern face with indignation that he should have dared to attempt to bribe him to deliver up a refugee.

He closed the door, and breathing heavily resumed his seat by the fire.

"Isabelita," said he, after a few moments' silence, "it is now safe for our guest to descend."

"Wait, *padre mio*," replied the girl, in the musical Castilian of her nation. "Rodriguez may return."

A rustling on the boards overhead indicated that Fred was awake to the situation.

"Has he gone?" he whispered, venturing to put his head over the aperture in the loft.

"Yes," answered the others together. "Ah!" added Isa, clasping her hands tragically, "I thought he would discover you, señor! It was a very narrow escape."

"Well, yes," said Fred coolly, swinging his legs down over the edge of the trap. "It was rather a close call. I had my fist ready to rap him on the head if he showed any signs of seeing me. But it was too dark up here. Would you mind moving that table a little nearer?"

A minute later he was on the floor, with the revolver and belt buckled around his waist.

"Ah," he exclaimed, though still in cautious tones, "'Richard is himself again!' Will you excuse me a moment if I take a few notes? This will make an awfully good story for the *Bulletin*, even if I don't get the first news of the fleet." And drawing out his note-book, which, fortunately, the guerillas had not confiscated, he began to scribble

rapidly in shorthand, while the daughter of the house resumed her simple preparations for the evening meal.

There was no further trouble that night, and, lulled by the steady patter of rain-drops on the thatch above him, Larkin slept soundly in the little loft where he had before taken refuge.

At daybreak he was aroused by his host. "Take food," said Cueva, "and then we will guide you within sight of the sea."

"Not both of you," said Fred, descending from his perch and rubbing his eyes. "And if you will give me the right direction, señor, I will not trouble either you or your daughter to accompany me a step. It would just be risking your own lives for mine."

The old Spaniard shook his head. "We shall go with you," he said. "I could not leave Isa alone, nor would it be safe for her to pass through this guerilla-infested forest without me. And it is necessary that you should be shown the right path or you will surely be taken again by the troops of one side or the other."

The meal was quickly disposed of, and the three set out together. Fred marvelled to see how the young girl sprang from boulder to boulder, and tripped along the fallen trunks of trees lightly as a deer. As he watched her slight figure and the dark eyes and smiling face she now and then turned

to him for encouragement, it occurred to the young reporter that he should miss this little Spanish maiden, and that if he had met her under happier auspices, the task of teaching her English and befriending her in various ways would have been far from irksome.

For a full hour they travelled swiftly and in silence along the mountain side. The morning was a foggy one, and Fred could not have told whether he was moving east or west to save his life.

At length Antonio halted. "If the fog breaks," said he in a whisper, his daughter translating after him, "you can see the ocean and your own ships from this point. By moving steadily onward and downward in that direction," indicating it with his hand, "you will reach the shore within two hours, and can await your opportunity for escape by water. And now, señor, farewell. You are with those who are fighting against my country, but you have been my guest, and—I am a Spaniard!" The old man drew himself up proudly, and his eyes flashed. "When you are among your friends again, remember that an Andalusian of the Cuevas would not betray one who had sought refuge beneath his roof. Farewell!"

"Good-by," said Fred, grasping warmly the hand extended to him. "You have saved my life, and I shall remember it. God bless you, señor. It

is n't *your* fault that you 're a Spaniard," he added ruefully; "you ought to have been a Massachusetts man, or at least a Vermonter! Good-by, *señorita*," turning to the girl, who had not translated his last outburst, and was standing silent, with downcast eyes. "I shall never forget you. Some time I may return"—he checked himself and pressed her little hand in both his own. "Good-by."

"*A Dios! A mas ver!*" And with one look into his eyes from her own which were suddenly moist, she turned and followed her father toward their mountain home.

For some time after their forms were lost in the mists that still hung about the hills, Larkin stood motionless, looking after them. Then he mechanically took out his note-book, but shut it with a snap and restored it to his pocket.

"No, by George!" said he, under his breath; "I won't make copy of *her*, if I never fill another stick!"

He gave himself a shake and turning toward the sea plunged down the mountain side as if the whole Spanish army were after him. In the course of half an hour the fog began to lighten and lift perceptibly, until he caught sight of the gleaming waters of the Atlantic.

"Hurrah!" he shouted, forgetting the necessity of silence in an enemy's country.

As if echoing his joyous shout a stern call came from the thicket directly before him.

"Halt! You are my prisoner!"

The words were in Spanish, and Fred instantly recognised the voice of Rodriguez, even before the latter's ugly face was thrust through the branches, followed by half a dozen others.

Larkin's first instinct was to dodge behind a tree and draw his revolver. Then as he saw a clump of shining Mauser barrels aimed directly at him he realised the folly of resistance.

"I surrender," he said, throwing up his hands, and stepping out into the open.

The Spanish regulars—for such their uniforms showed them to be—were upon him in an instant, and for the second time in twenty-four hours he was a captive.

Rodriguez, who seemed to be a guide rather than the leader of the squad, roughly unbuckled the prisoner's belt, his eyes sparkling with triumph as he viewed the revolver.

"So *they* helped you off!" he muttered in Fred's ear, as he bound his hands behind him. "It was a fine trap I set for old Cueva and his pretty daughter! Ha! Ha!"

"Silence!" commanded a lieutenant who had now come to the front. "This way—march!"

The reporter saw in an instant that while Rodri-

guez had not guessed his retreat on the previous evening the wily Spaniard suspected from the manner of the simple old man and the trepidation of the girl that they had some inkling of his whereabouts. Leaving the pistol ostentatiously behind, with the belief that they would lose no time in handing it over to the escaped prisoner, Rodriguez had hastened directly to the Spanish camp; and knowing the path he would be certain to take to reach the sea, had intercepted him, with the desired result. It was an adroit plan, well laid and carried out. In addition to the service he had performed for Linares' troops, he now had the Cuevas in his power; for here was plain proof of their complicity in aiding the escape of a spy.

"I say, Rod, you're a genius!" remarked Fred, admiringly, as he marched beside his captor.

The latter, who it appeared knew more English than he was willing to admit on ordinary occasions, showed his teeth as his bushy moustache curled in a gratified and triumphant smile.

"You seem to be at home in all three camps," continued Larkin. "The guerillas,——"

"*Estése Usted quieto!*" said the Spaniard angrily, striking the American roughly across the mouth.

Fred's good-natured face crimsoned, and involuntarily he gave a hard tug at his bonds. One of the

soldiers, seeing this, raised the butt of his musket threateningly, and the poor fellow realised how thoroughly he was in the power of his captors. He ground his teeth, and was silent as he trudged on. To his relief the treacherous bandit left his side, and joined the officer in advance.

Early in the afternoon the low, flat roofs of Santiago were in sight, and in due time the escort entered the city with their prisoner. The latter was hailed with cries of "Down with the Americans! Death to the pigs! Hang the Yankee spy!"

Fred was not sure he would escape alive from the frantic crowds, but the armed soldiers gathered in closely about him, and to his relief he was at last securely lodged in prison.

About one week from that time, it may be noted in passing, gallant Lieutenant Blue left the fleet and made a détour of seventy miles around the harbour of Santiago, counting and inspecting the ships that lay there, and satisfying himself beyond a doubt that all were in the harbour except the *Terror*. This fact being settled, the blockade proceeded in dead earnest.

On the night of June 3rd the Spaniards made a memorable attack on the American ships with their torpedo boats. Shortly after ten o'clock a flash of coloured lights on the deck of the *New Orleans* gave

warning that an enemy was in sight. A second signal indicated that a torpedo boat had been seen. Immediately night signals flashed around the six or seven miles' circuit of the blockading squadron, while shots came from the rapid-fire battery of the *New Orleans*.

It should be explained that, as the "wigwag" system of flag-signals was of course useless after dark, flash-lights and red and white electric bulbs were used for communication between the ships. The latter method conformed to the "Ardois System." The bulbs (familiarly known as "shroud lights"), four in number, are placed well up on the foremast, in groups of two, forming a line one above the other. The code is the same as the wigwag. One is indicated by a red light, two by white, and three by the combination, white, white, red, and white. The bulbs are lighted by electricity, and any or all may be turned on or off at will.

To return to the night of June 3rd—the *New York* came on at full speed, hoping to shut off the stranger from the harbour.

"A torpedo boat one point forward on the port beam, sir; headed this way," reported the ensign to Captain Chadwick; and for some minutes the guns of the flagship boomed out. The *Oregon*, coming up to the eastward, followed with two shots from her huge guns. Then the signal "Cease firing"

was given. The search-lights gave no sign of the enemy.

That no false alarm had roused the fleet to action was evident next morning, when the *Porter* found two loaded torpedoes floating offshore. They had been discharged at the ships, but had missed their mark. One of them was taken on board; the other sank as they were seeking to lift it. The one recovered was a 14-inch Whitehead torpedo, worth about thirty-five hundred dollars, and able to sink any ship in the squadron if it had struck fairly!

Fred Larkin was missed on board the despatch boat, but his movements had always been so erratic that his absence caused little remark.

"Look out for some big scare-heads in the *Bulletin*," said one of the newspaper men to another, with a laugh. "Nothing would make Larkin really content but advance news of an earthquake, or the destruction of the whole Spanish army."

At that very minute the adventurous young reporter was in his narrow cell in the Santiago barrack prison, talking with no less redoubtable a personage than Martin Stevens, ex-naval cadet and Spanish spy. The renegade from Annapolis had learned of the capture, and, always on the lookout for furthering his own interests, had proceeded at once to interview the prisoner. What his proposition was, and how it was received, must be reserved for another chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A CHAPTER IN HISTORY.

The time had come for a final movement upon Cuba. The Spanish fleet at Manila had been destroyed, and Aguinaldo with his insurgent forces was drawing the net tightly around that city, held in check by the attitude of the Americans rather than by the hereditary lords of the soil. Cervera's ships were now known to be cooped up in the harbour of Santiago, whence they might at any time make a sudden dash for the high seas, Hobson's daring attempt to cork the bottle having, after all, failed of entire success. The sunken *Merrimac* was a peril to navigation in the straits, but it was found that her position was such as not to obstruct entirely the entrance or exit of even deep-draught vessels. Gomez and Garcia, with other insurgent generals, professed themselves ready to co-operate with the Americans as soon as the junction could be made. Their camps dotted the shores of Cuba and several shiploads of ammunition had been successfully con-

veyed to them from American ports. Everything was ready for the army of occupation.

It was destined, however, that in this, as in other great movements of the war, the navy should take the lead. On the 10th of June a battalion of marines landed near the entrance of the outer harbour of Guantanamo, taking possession of an abandoned cable station at that point. Another body of marines landed the same day at Daiquiri, east of Aguadores, but the position could not be maintained by so small a force. The first to land at Guantanamo were forty men from the *Oregon*; they were followed by six hundred from the troop-ship *Panther*. Encamped on a hill, they were at once exposed to a steady fire from Spanish regulars and guerillas which they returned with vigour. The fighting lasted thirteen hours.

"Below in the bay," said the Associated Press despatch, "were the warships at anchor. Inland from the hill camp is a deep ravine and beyond this are high hills. The adjacent country is heavy with a thicket growth. The sky was blanketed with clouds, and when the sun set a gale was blowing seaward. Night fell, thick and impenetrable.

"The Spanish squads concealed in the chapparal cover had the advantage, the Americans on the ridge furnishing fine targets against the sky and white tents. The Spaniards fought from cover till

midnight, discoverable only by flashes, at which the marines fired volleys. The repeaters sounded like crackers in a barrel.

"The *Marblehead* launch, a Colt machine-gun in her bow, pushed up the bay, enfilading the Spaniards, and it is thought that some were killed.

"The ships threw their search-lights ashore, the powerful electric eyes sweeping the deep tropic foliage and disclosing occasionally skulking parties of Spaniards. It all resembled a transformation scene at a theatre. Each discovery of the enemy was greeted by the crackle of carbine fire along the edge of the camp ridge or by the long roll of the launch's gun searching the thickets with a leaden stream.

"Shortly after midnight came the main attack. The Spaniards made a gallant charge up the southwest slope, but were met by repeated volleys from the main body and broke before they were one-third of the way up the hill; but they came so close that at points there was almost a hand-to-hand struggle.

"The officers used their revolvers. Three Spaniards got through the open formation to the edge of the camp.

"Toward morning the fire slackened. Dawn is the favourite time for attack, and as the east paled the marines lying on their guns were aroused.

Some were actually asleep, as they had had no rest for forty-eight hours, and tired nature could no longer stand the strain.

“ But no attack came. Three new 12-pound field-guns, which could not be used during the night for fear of hitting our own men, shelled several squads of Spaniards after daylight.

“ They dove into the bushes like prairie dogs into burrows, as the shells broke over them in the grey dawn.

“ The officers engaged give high praise to the nerve and steadiness of officers and men, especially the young ones, as the engagement was a baptism of fire for a large majority. The men were in darkness and in a strange land, but they stood to their post with courage and fortitude.

“ The question has come to be, how long is this gallant company of first-class fighting men to be left to withstand the assaults of four times their number, with the superior force familiar with every bush and by-path, every place for ambuscade, each point of advantage ? ”

Meanwhile the embarkation of the army had been attended with many unforeseen obstacles and delays. Just as the transports were starting, news was brought that a number of Spanish war-vessels were lurking about in the track of the expedition. Orders to leave were recalled, and another wait en-

sued, until armed convoys should arrive. At last, on the 14th of June, the expedition sailed with General Shafter and seventeen thousand men.

"There was a scene here Wednesday," wrote a correspondent, "the like of which cannot be paralleled in America without calling up in memory the days of the Civil War.

"Early in the morning, before the first flash of grey and carmine in the eastern sky, an army was preparing to move.

"Orders had been given the night before and early bugle-call aroused sleepy regulars and tired volunteers, who at once began to break camp. While the cooks were preparing breakfast, regiment after regiment in Tampa proper, at the heights, at Palmetto beach, at Soda Park, and at a dozen other places where the pines and oaks afford a shelter from the sun, were preparing to depart.

"Tents came down like toy-houses. Orders sounded firm and fast, and thousands of anxious but jubilant men hurried to obey. Whole cities of white canvas were razed before the breakfast call, and mule waggon wheels were rolling up the dust in company streets before the sun was an hour high."

The fleet consisted of thirty-five transport-ships, four tenders, and fourteen convoys. No one outside the Department knew where the landing-place

was to be, save that of necessity it could not be far from Santiago.

On the morning of the 22nd, after a feint attack at another point to deceive the enemy, the real landing was begun at Daiquiri, and by nightfall six thousand troops were on shore in camp near the ruins of the village, which had been burned by the Spaniards the day before.

The rest of the army followed, and by the 25th the last regiments were ready to march on Santiago, before which the advance troops were already fighting.

The ships meanwhile had bombarded Morro Castle, and covered the landing of Shafter's men, throwing hundreds of tons of steel upon the Cuban shores. All this battery work entailed an enormous expense upon the United States.

The 13-inch guns of the *Indiana* class of battleships, when provided with the new smokeless powder, require a service charge of powder of about two hundred and forty pounds, and an exercise charge of a little less than ninety pounds.

The cost of one discharge, using armour-piercing shells, is estimated at \$500, and when using an exercise charge, \$99.

The life of a 13-inch gun when using the new smokeless powder has not been determined, but it is considerably longer than when using the former

brown powder. It may be taken as eight hundred service charges.

In estimating the cost of a shot no allowance is made above for the wear and tear of the gun. Allowing eight hundred service charges as the life of the piece, the cost of deterioration of the gun per discharge is about \$62.

It is said to be a fact that five practice charges do not fatigue the gun more than one service round. This, then, would give the cost of one practice round in deterioration as \$12.40.

The total cost of firing a 13-inch gun would then be as follows: Service charge, with armour-piercing shell, \$562; exercise charge, with common shell, \$111.40.

The 12-inch guns of the navy, the calibre which in future will be the largest carried by the United States warships, will use about one hundred and twenty pounds of the new smokeless powder, as against three hundred pounds of the former brown powder. The penetration power imparted by the new smokeless nitrate, assisted by the lengthened barrels of the new pieces, are as great as those of the 13-inch gun.

The 6-inch guns of the navy will require but fifteen pounds of the new smokeless powder as against fifty pounds of the old brown powder. The saving in weight is a matter of the greatest import-

ance to the naval constructors. To the artillerists it means ability to carry a large ammunition supply.

At Manila there was little for the American fleet to do but maintain the blockade and watch the insurgents as they gradually gained the upper hand of their ancient oppressors. The Admiral had an opportunity, of which he availed himself, to make a study of the islands from various reports which were brought in as well as from his own observation. He was particularly desirous of learning the extent of the resources of the group in regard to coal.

The coal which up to the present times has been found in the Philippine Islands is not true coal, but lignite, probably of the tertiary period, and of a variety which can scarcely be distinguished by the eye from true coal. There is no reason why true coal should not eventually be found, for it is found and worked in Japan, where the geological formation has much in common with that of the Philippines. There has been no systematic search made in these islands for coal, and wherever it has been found it has betrayed its presence by outcrops. Thus in the island of Masbate, a local steamship owner drew his supplies from a bed of coal which is so tilted as to have the appearance of a vein. Mr. Hilton estimated the available quantity at about six hundred thousand tons. He is of opinion that very much larger quantities are available. These mines are

practically untouched, and are within a few miles of the coast and can be worked at a profit. A similar supply of lignite has recently been found in the district where the Philippines' Mineral Syndicate is working.

On the 4th of June the gallant Captain Gridley died. He was deeply lamented by his men, who now began to long for the end of hostilities and the homeward voyage. Reinforcements were sent from the United States, and the fall of Manila seemed imminent.

In Cuba Pedro Cueva was getting very tired of military service. If it had not been for the prospect of finding his father and Isa, he might have deserted and run away. But where should he run to? The island was full of soldiers, it seemed, and he must serve on one side or the other—or starve! So he remained in the ranks, taking part in occasional skirmishes with the insurgents, drilling, marching to and fro, and growing more and more ragged and hungry.

Early in June the regiment in which he served was ordered to Manzanillo, where a large body of Spanish troops were gathering in readiness to relieve the garrison of Santiago if that city should be attacked by the American forces. Accordingly, Pedro was packed into the cars again with his comrades and hurried southward. Ten days later there

was a weary march into the interior, with the loss of half a dozen more men by the bullets of concealed rebel sharpshooters, and a new camp was reached at Palma Soriano. Word came from General Toral, who now succeeded Linares in command at Santiago, that all available troops were needed at once. The four thousand regulars, under General Pando, then bivouacking on the road from Manzanillo, were ordered forward, and amid the crackling musketry of the insurgents, who fired from every point of vantage, resumed their march to the relief of the beleaguered city.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE MODERN CRUISER.

Norman Holmes found time hanging very heavily on his hands after his return from the scouting expedition. He had his regular duties to perform on board ship, but these, while the vessel was in harbour, were comparatively light for the young engineer. There was the regular routine to be gone through, drills without number, false alarms of fire to test the crew's readiness in an emergency; and, of course, the machinery to keep in perfect order. Still there was much leisure for the officers, and Norman cast about him for some useful occupation to kill time.

The letters he received from home displayed considerable ignorance of the details of ship life, in spite of the special facilities of the Holmes family for acquiring knowledge in that field. Norman resolved, therefore, to write a series of letters to Annie, carefully describing the different classes of vessels in the navy, and the life of officers and crew

on board. Several of these letters have come into our hands, and at the risk of becoming tedious, we shall copy at full length the one describing the "cruiser."

"The term cruiser," wrote Norman, "used to apply, in the days of sailing ships, to the frigates, the type next most formidable to the old line-of-battle ships, and was intended to compass the speedier of the heavy fighting craft delegated to the particular service of hunting up the enemy or preying upon his commerce; and, with certain technical modifications, practically all of our large, swift, unarmoured vessels of the late war were so classified.

"The gunboat was then, and now is, the small vessel of moderate speed and gun-power, unmarked for special service by very peculiar characteristics of either offence or defence. With us, the gunboat has a maximum displacement, or total weight, of something just over 1770 tons, and a minimum of 839 tons—the *Castine* and *Machias* representing the major extreme, and the little *Bancroft* representing the minor extreme.

"Of the simple, or unprotected, cruiser type, we have three: the *Detroit*, *Marblehead*, and *Montgomery*, each of a trifle over two thousand tons displacement. When these vessels were first designed they were officially known as gunboats, but the department wisely saw that a limit must be drawn some-

where, and, placing the gunboat limit of size to craft under two thousand tons, the three vessels at once became dignified as cruisers. Besides, their promised speed and their fulfilment in reaching over eighteen knots reasonably made them deserving of the title in conjunction with their pretty heavy batteries of rapid-fire guns.

“ The simple, or unprotected, cruiser, in common even with gunboats, has no protection, in the shape of armour, for her ‘vitals,’ as her engines, her boilers, and her magazines are called. She has a watertight deck, though, of moderate plating, which extends from side to side and from bow to stern, completely roofing over the vitals. While not proof against even moderate shot, this deck prevents the admission of water below, which may come in through breaks in the plating above this deck, and in that materially aids in preserving the stability of the craft if pierced by shell just above the waterline, but near enough to admit water in careening. So far as possible, coal is placed above this deck and against the sides as a bulwark against the attack of an enemy; and while the coal remains there, it forms a good defence to guns ranging from 1-pounders to 6-pounders. The armoured shields borne by some of the guns or the armour placed about some of the gun-ports is not considered protection to the craft herself, and while either may be

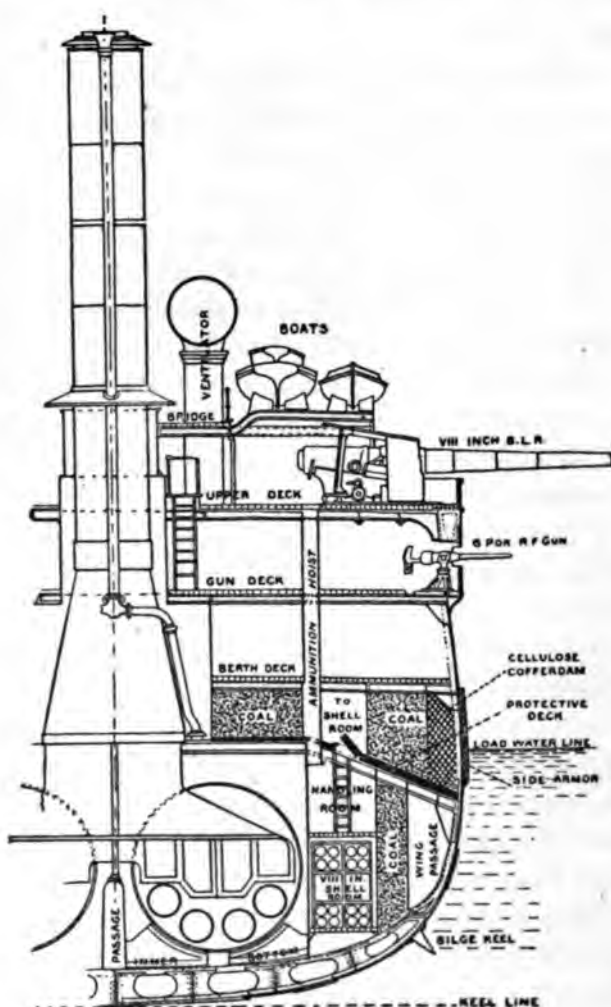
present on a simple cruiser, the fact that her vitals remain undefended makes her an unprotected cruiser.

“ The protected cruiser is the next advance upon the simple cruiser. Here, again, we have a water-tight deck, but this time it is supplemented with a coat of mail, and may range on the flat portion from one inch to two and one-half inches, and vary on the slopes at the sides from one and one-half to four and three-quarter inches. This armour presents a deflective front to shot passing through the sides and threatening the magazines and the motive power, and, of course, gives the vessel the power of standing up before craft capable of dealing out certain destruction to the simple cruiser. Again, the coal is stowed along the sides above and below the water-tight and protective deck, and a new defence in the shape of a band of cellulose stands ready to take the first shock of attack and to plug automatically by its own swelling all shot-holes admitting water. Of course it is not proof against explosive shells, which may displace it rather than merely pass through it.

“ Of the protected cruiser type, the *Olympia* is by long odds the most typical vessel in our service. Aside from her hull protection, the guns of her main battery, four 8-inch guns, are mounted in two turrets, an all-around shelter unequalled by any ship of like class and size in the world; and some

notion of what this and the other phases of this 5800-ton ship's defensive qualities constitute may be gathered when it is realised that she could stand up and give a good account of herself against either the British *Powerful* or *Terrible*, ships of over 14,000 tons displacement.

“ The armoured cruiser represented in our service by the *New York* and the *Brooklyn*, is the protected cruiser bettered by slightly heavier armour on her protective deck, slightly heavier armour about her turreted guns, and the presence of a band of water-line vertical armour and plating of from three to four inches on her sides just above this heavy belt. This water-line armour is placed amidships, and reaches fore and aft throughout the region occupied by the vitals. As can be seen, the armoured cruiser is a larger and heavier protected version of the protected cruiser, and, again, able to withstand blows that would render an unprotected, or even a protected cruiser, defenceless in a very short while. She has great speed—in the case of the two vessels named fully twenty-one knots—and she is, as the old wooden frigate was, the next most formidable craft to a battleship. In battle she may take her place in the line, and bear with the slower but more powerful ships a fair share of the enemy's attack; but her especial service will be to look up the enemy's armoured cruisers—not battleships—or the larger



of her protected cruisers, and give battle with a reasonable assurance of victory.

“ The armoured cruiser is the cavalryman of the sea, and to it will fall that service demanding dash, force, and quickness of execution.

“ The protected cruiser is really the commerce destroyer, and is coated with just enough mail to give her a preponderance of defence over the armed escort probably detailed to watch over an enemy's merchant craft. Swift, of considerable gun-power, and of great ease of movement, she is indeed to be dreaded by everything but craft of ample speed, fine protection, and good powers of retaliation.

“ The simple cruiser falls in behind the protected cruiser in the same line of service; but she must be wary lest her quarry be a merchantman of gun-power or be convoyed by a sturdy craft of speed and superior battery.

“ The gunboat naturally must confine its operations to domestic service, the guardianship of merchantmen in our own waters, despatch service, or picket duty for the heavy ships that must meet the foe in force and to a conclusion.”

Norman accompanied his letter (which reached Annie in August!) with a fairly drawn sectional view of a cruiser (see page 245). He found himself much happier with plenty of work on his hands, and was

commended by his superiors when they learned what he was about.

On the 30th of June the first military expedition from the United States reached Manila, and the speedy capture of the islands seemed certain. At home, memories of the Civil War were revived by the new Internal Revenue Stamp Law, which went into effect on that day—every stamp bearing a picture of a warship!

CHAPTER XXV.

CONDEMNED TO DEATH.

"It will put a thousand dollars into your pocket, and no one will be the wiser," urged Stevens, in a low whisper.

He was seated on a stool in front of the grated door of a narrow cell in the military prison of Santiago. Within, separated from the other by iron bars, was Fred Larkin, under arrest as a spy. He listened coolly to Stevens's proposition, and repeated it after him, imitating the renegade's cautious tones.

"As I understand it, you want me to give away everything I know of Sampson's plans, the make-up of the fleet, and the proposed landing-place for the army?"

Stevens nodded eagerly, and glanced over his shoulder to see that no one else was listening.

"For this little service you will hand me five thousand pesetas in gold——"

"Yes, yes!"

"And smuggle me off on the *Viscaya*, which is in

port and expected to run out on the next dark night ? ”

“ That ’s it. That ’s the programme. When will you see—— ”

“ Hold on! Let ’s have it all. In conclusion, you will take a solemn oath never to divulge my act in so betraying my country ? ”

“ Don’t be sentimental! What ’s your country or mine ? A lot of hard-headed politicians in Washington, all looking out for their own interests, as you and I are going to for ours. Well, I understand you agree—— ”

“ Hardly, my boy,” said the prisoner.

“ What do you mean by that ? ”

“ I mean that in my opinion you, Martin Stevens, ex-naval cadet of the United States Navy, are a contemptible, low-lived scoundrel and traitor; and I trust that in our far-off Territory-to-be of Philippine the hemp is growing that will give you your deserts! ”

Stevens sprang to his feet, fairly gnashing his teeth with rage and mortification.

“ Do you know, my fine fellow,” he hissed out, “ that the hemp is grown and twisted that will swing you up as a spy within two weeks ? ”

“ Maybe, maybe,” said Larkin, “ but not as a traitor. There ’s that little distinction between us, as yet, and I ’m willing to let it remain. ”

"You 'll regret this," stammered Martin, hardly able to speak. "It was your last chance. I 'll have nothing more to do with you."

"Thanks. That 's thoughtful of you at any rate."

Stevens overturned the stool with a vicious kick, and strode off down the corridor, leaving the reporter of the *Bulletin* to his meditations.

"I 'd like to know what the old man is thinking about me," he said to himself, referring thus disrespectfully to the dignified editor-in-chief of that widely known journal. "If he knew I was cooped up here, I verily believe he 'd charter an ocean liner and send it after me with a *Bulletin* crew and regiment. 'T would be just like him! Wonder if he 'd know me if he saw me!"

Larkin's appearance had indeed changed since that evening when he had gaily bade Hallie Holmes good-by on the Newbury Street threshold. His beard had been suffered to grow, and from confinement and want of sufficient food he was thin and haggard. "If I stay here much longer on half-rations," he mused grimly, "there won't be much man to hang!"

Why the execution was delayed he hardly knew, unless it was in accordance with the usual habit of Spanish procrastination. He had been given to understand that his case had been passed upon by

the authorities, and that he was condemned to die. No one, save Stevens, had been allowed to see him of late. Each morning he awoke realising that it might be his last on earth. The strain was great, and even the jolly young newspaper man's nerves began to give way.

He had heard a great commotion and cheering one forenoon, and was told by the surly guard that one of the American warships had tried to force the harbour, and had been sunk by the Morro batteries. He knew enough of Spanish "victories" not to credit this report in its entirety, yet when he was told a few days later, that the survivors of the crew were confined as prisoners in that very building, he could not help fearing the worst.

Heavy cannonading from the direction of the sea was now of daily occurrence. It was evident that some important movement was on foot. Still the sun rose and set, and the convicted spy was not called out for execution. All unknown to him his countrymen had effected a landing on Cuban soil, and the "Rough Riders" had passed through their terrible baptism of fire.

One day the guard vouchsafed another bit of information. "Reinforcements will arrive from Manzanillo to-morrow. The Yankees will all be driven into the sea!"

Larkin could hear the military music and the out-

cries of the crowd as the troops paraded and passed out of the city to meet the advancing Americans. But the reinforcements did not arrive on the morrow.

The sufferings of the army and the starving inhabitants of Santiago increased every day. Flour was sold at one hundred gold dollars per barrel. Eggs were fifteen cents each, and a big biscuit could be bought for twenty cents. The streets were thronged with women and children begging for food. Rice was served out to the soldiers for rations, and little Pedro, now stationed in the trenches encircling the city, was thankful for his share.

"*Surrender!*" thundered the American guns from the floating forts outside the harbour.

"Never!" replied the intrepid Toral.

"SURRENDER!" rattled the musketry of the Yankees.

"We will all die first!"

Shells began to fall in the streets of Santiago, exploding with terrific roars, followed by the crash of falling buildings and the screams of frightened women.

The United States forces pushed on over the rough ground, along mountain trails, and roads knee-deep with mud, through bramble and underbrush and barbed wire. There was a terrible fight at Las Guasimas, where the Spaniards made a stand in an old sugar-mill, from which they were driven

with great loss. The regulars, accustomed to life on the plains and warfare with the Indians, marched and fired coolly, and swept forward with irresistible attack. The "Rough Riders," composed of cow-boys and Eastern athletes, charged through the forest as if they were running a football down the college gridiron, where their previous triumphs had been won. A newspaper correspondent was shot, but in the intervals of consciousness wrote an account of the fight and gave it to a soldier-boy to be forwarded to his paper in New York.

The story of the battle was naïvely and completely told by a Spanish prisoner, the next day. He said of the United States Volunteers: "They did not fight like other soldiers. When we fired a volley, they advanced instead of going back. The more we fired the nearer they came to us. We are not used to fighting with men who act in that way!"

Engagements followed at Aguadores and San Juan, and another important battle at El Caney, which was captured by the Americans after heavy fighting on the 1st of July. The loss of life was far greater than in any previous engagement of the war.

"The firing was incessant and general," says an eye-witness, "that nearest sounding like never-ending strings of firecrackers completely encircling you, while five or six hundred yards away it seemed

as if the crackers had all been tumbled into barrels. It was easy to distinguish the sharp, metallic crack of the Mauser from the crash of the Krag-Jørgensen volleys, which assailed the ears like continuous quick ripping of linen. By noon there had come a lull, broken only now and again by the spiteful report of some cracker that had not gone off in the bunch.

“ Gradually, slowly, but certainly, the American lines drew closer and closer upon town and fort and blockhouses and trenches. But the Spaniards were fighting desperately and making a bold stand.

“ From the rocky point on which I held my place I could look straight down the line of the Seventh (U. S. Regulars), who for over one hundred yards lay prostrate just back of the brow of the rise. Their elevation above the blockhouse and earth-works at the north end of Caney was so slight that even to rise on elbow was to expose one's self. But the men did rise and they did some splendid shooting, encouraged by General Chaffee, who, with one button and part of his shoulder-strap shot away, walked up and down behind the line, encouraging and steadying his men in their trying position.

“ There was one young officer, Lieutenant W——, whom I noted especially, crawling on hands and knees among his men, jumping up every little while regardless of Spaniards, to go to the assistance of

some man who had dropped in his vicinity. At last, as he started on a new errand of mercy, he dropped—a bullet through his heart.

“ At half-past four those Spaniards who were left retreating towards Santiago assembled on a small hill half a mile off, and fired several volleys at us, defiant to the last.”

At San Juan the loss of life had been heaviest that day, the list of killed and wounded Americans mounting up to nearly one thousand. An English war correspondent described the taking of San Juan heights as follows: “ When afternoon came—I lost exact account of time—there was still a jumble of volleying over by Caney. But in front our men were away out of sight behind a ridge far ahead. Beyond there arose a long, steepish ascent, crowned by the blockhouse upon which artillery had opened fire in the morning.

“ Suddenly, as we looked through our glasses, we saw a little black ant go scrambling quickly up this hill, and an inch or two behind him a ragged line of other little ants, and then another line of ants at another part of the hill, and then another, until it seemed as if somebody had dug a stick into a great ant’s nest down in the valley, and all the ants were scrambling away up-hill.

“ Then the volley-firing began more furious than before; from the right beyond the top of the ridge

burst upon the ants a terrible fire of shells; from the blockhouse in front of them machine-guns sounded their continuous rattle. But the ants swept up the hill. They seemed to us to thin out as they went forward; but they still went forward. It was incredible, but it was grand. The boys were storming the hill!

“ As they neared the top the different lines came nearer together. One moment they went a little more slowly, then they nearly stopped, then they went on again faster than ever, and then all of us sitting there on the top of the battery cried with excitement. For the ants were scrambling all round the blockhouse, and in a moment or two we saw them inside it. But then our hearts swelled up into our throats, for a fearful fire came from somewhere beyond the blockhouse, and from somewhere to the right of it and somewhere to the left of it. Then we saw the ants come scrambling down the hill again. They had taken a position which they had not the force to hold. But a moment or two and up they scrambled again, more of them, and more quickly than before, and up the other face of the hill to the left went other lines, and the ridge was taken, and the blockhouse was ours, and the trenches were full of dead Spaniards.

“ It was a grand achievement, this storming of the hill leading up from the San Juan River to the

ridge before the main fort. Later on we knew only too well what the cost was."

That evening there was a heavy step and the clanking of arms in the corridor of the Santiago prison. Fred sprang to his feet and his heart thumped hard, for he had never before received a visit at this hour.

A lieutenant and four guards halted opposite the door of his cell. The key grated in the lock, and the door slowly swung open.

"Blindfold the prisoner!" commanded the officer, sternly, with no sign of pity in his voice.

"Preserve my papers, and if possible send them into the American lines after my death," said poor Larkin in the best Spanish he could muster.

The papers were in his breast pocket, and were left undisturbed. His hands were manacled, and a bandage fastened tightly over his eyes.

In that moment Fred's memory flashed, like a search-light from the fleet, over his past life. It was not a bad one to look back upon, yet he wished it were better. At the same moment a single face rose before him—the face of a young girl with dark, laughing eyes.

"Do you—did you ever meet a girl named Isabella Cueva?" he asked the officer in low tones, as the guard roughly adjusted the bandage.

"Cueva?—Yes. She lives with her father in the

mountains toward El Cobre. I have seen her here on market-day," the lieutenant vouchsafed to answer.

"Tell her the American prisoner sent 'good-by' to her."

The Spaniard did not reply. A soldier closed in on each side of the condemned man, and passed an arm under each elbow.

"Forward!" and the young reporter, led helplessly between his guards, left the prison forever.

CHAPTER XXVI.

UNDER THE STARS AND STRIPES.

The *Bulletin* readers had very soon begun to miss the graphic reports from "Our Special Correspondent at the Front." He was not known by name to the public, but his work was appreciated and the paper seemed dull without it. The proprietors consulted with the head of the editorial department, and sent a long despatch to another reporter on the *Witch*, inquiring for Fred Larkin, to whom they had already telegraphed in vain.

The reply came back, "delayed in transmission," that nothing had been seen of Larkin for several days. There was a rumour that he had been wounded or taken prisoner.

Then the great paper bestirred itself, making interesting "copy" of its own movements and the search for the missing reporter. Inquiries were set on foot throughout the fleet and army, and at last two men were found who admitted that they rowed him to the shore several days before. They had

promised to say nothing about it, but as something had evidently occurred to thwart the daring reporter's plans, they felt the seal of secrecy removed.

The *Bulletin* sent a man into the nearest camp of the insurgents, and here definite news was obtained. A Spanish prisoner, captured in one of the daily skirmishes between the opposing forces, said there was an American newspaper man imprisoned in Santiago. It was understood that he was captured while seeking information in Spanish territory, and that he was shortly to be hung or shot as a spy.

Immediately the great Boston Daily besieged the War Department at Washington with requests for official intervention and exchange. After a tedious delay orders were transmitted to the chief of one of the divisions now on Cuban soil to send a flag of truce in to General Linares (then in command), with a request for exchange, a choice of certain Spanish prisoners being offered for Larkin.

The message reached the headquarters at Santiago on the 26th of June, but the heavy fighting which followed hard upon the landing of Shafter's troops occupied the attention of the Spaniards to the exclusion of Larkin's case. The *Bulletin* telegraphed again and again, both to Washington and the American headquarters; still no answer was received from Santiago. It was now rumoured that Larkin

had already been executed and that the Spaniards were concealing the fact.

Energetic action on the part of the *Bulletin* proprietors, aided by certain military and naval officers, at last brought a favourable reply from General Toral. The Spanish prisoners were sent ashore under a guard, and marched to the front, where, under a white flag, they awaited the emissaries from Santiago.

As Fred Larkin emerged from the prison his escort halted to allow a squad of men to pass in. Fred could see nothing, but he thought he recognised a voice which apparently was pleading for mercy from his captors.

"Who is that, and where are they taking him?" he asked.

"Another of you Yankee spies. Name, Stevens. He will be put in your cell, and will be shot to-morrow morning at daybreak."

Fred understood it all in a moment. With characteristic treachery the renegade cadet, as soon as he found that the fortunes of war were going against his newly adopted country, had determined to go over to the Americans, bringing such information as should quiet any ugly rumours regarding his past conduct. He had probably been regarded with suspicion at the outset, and had been detected and seized before his plans were ripe.

"Save me, save me, Larkin!" he cried out, as he recognised the man he had tempted in that same prison.

The sound of a blow and execrations from the guards followed, and the two Americans were hurried apart.

Larkin, led by his attendants, and stumbling now and then, walked as in a dream. He tried to realise that he had but a few more minutes of life, and he wondered vaguely upon what marvels his waking eyes would open the instant those rifle-shots should ring out or the drop fall from beneath his feet. Then, by a curious freak of imagination he could see the great "scare-heads" of the *Bulletin* announcing his death, and could hear the cries of the newsboys on Washington Street, shouting "Full 'count o' the Execution!" The paper would sell at least twenty thousand copies extra for the brief despatch from the little coast station near Santiago. That would be, let me see (he mused), three hundred dollars clear gain on gross sales. And if—

"Halt!"

Had the time come, then? No, they were passing some sort of a sentry line. The deed was to be done in the suburbs, it seemed, rather than in barracks. That was odd! Fred tried to remember where the men of the *Virginus* had been executed.

He stumbled frequently now, for the ground was

rough. He could hear occasional shots, as if a picket-line or sharpshooters were engaging. On and on. "I must be somewhere near Havana now," he said to himself grimly, and chuckled at the joke. A firmer grip of his pinioned arms by the guard reminded him that he was laughing on the brink of the grave.

Now he thought he heard voices, and—could it be? Were there other prisoners to be executed at the same time?—the sound of his own dear mother tongue!

Again the sharp command, "Halt!"

Then came a short colloquy in liquid Spanish on one side and very poor attempts at the same language on the other. He was pushed forward, not ungently. The cords were taken from his wrists; he heard the folds of something flapping in the breeze, close beside him. Fingers fumbled at the knot at the back of his head; the bandage fell to the ground, and gazing upward with dazed eyes he saw a banner—not the hated red and yellow of Castile and Aragon, but the blessed Stars and Stripes, side by side with the white token of truce.

"Larkin, old fellow, you're a free man! Come along! There's a good supper waiting for you on the *Witch*!"

It was the voice, the face, the clasping hand of one of his old comrades. The lieutenant, with a

terse "*Adios!*" was turning away with two additions to his party in Spanish uniform, who were receiving the congratulations of the others. He was under the flag of the United States, alive, safe, free!

The revulsion was too great. Worn and weakened by hunger and confinement, Fred stretched one thin hand up toward the flag, and, with a hoarse cry, still clinging to his friend, fell headlong into his arms.

When his senses returned a few moments later, he was being borne swiftly and steadily by two strong men toward the American lines. The occasional *whe-e-ew!* of a Mauser bullet told the party that they were not yet out of danger, and they were hastening homeward as fast as possible.

"I say," gasped Fred, with a little struggle, "you fellows need n't carry me. I can walk—God bless you!"

"Don't worry, sor!" (He was an Irish sergeant of a Massachusetts regiment.) "Sure we cud take yez from here to Kay West an' niver feel it!"

"You 'd get your feet wet!" retorted Fred, his strength and spirits returning every moment. "Just let me try, will you? There 's nothing the matter with me."

They put him down, and found that, supported by a strong arm on each side, he could manage to "keep up with the procession," as he joyfully expressed it.

And now the trenches were reached, and a great cheer went up from the men in them as the exchanged prisoner was recognised. One young fellow of the volunteers, hardly more than a boy, sprang to the top of the earthworks and waved his cap lustily.

Suddenly there was a sharp, whip-like crack from somewhere in the distant tree-tops—no one knew exactly where, for the smokeless powder of the sharpshooter's Mauser told no tales—and the volunteer spun round. He ceased to cheer and clutched his side. Then, with a strange, surprised smile on his young face, and the words "I've got it, boys!" he fell into the trench. When they picked him up for the hospital men, the smile was still there, but he had ceased to breathe.

Saddened by the sight of the young soldier's death, but soon forgetting it in the rush of glad emotions as he advanced through the lines, Larkin was conducted to a tent in the rear where he could rest and obtain refreshments.

"Then we'll get back lively to the *Witch*," said Jim Doane, his friend of the *New York Daily*.

"Not much!" returned Fred. "I'm at the front now, and I'll stay here if it's all the same to you, James!"

"Nonsense! You're all done up, man. The *Bulletin* will make enough out of your adventures

and exchange to give you a week's vacation. I've got to go out to the fleet anyway, and—— "

" And you 'll just take this along with you, like a good fellow," said Fred, tearing out a dozen or more sheets of his note-book. " Start them on to the States somehow, and I 'll soon have more to follow. You can write up the story of to-day's affair for the *Daily*, if you like. None of the other fellows will have it."

So Fred stayed, and threw his fortunes in with the fighting army, as did so many of the brave newspaper men in the war. The very next day he was actively engaged in writing up a skirmish, as well as supplying some missing details in the account of his capture and imprisonment.

Two days later it was noised about the camp that the Spanish fleet had escaped from Santiago. The terrible cannonading of the two fleets announced a great naval battle outside and conflicting reports flew along the lines, some having it that Cervera's ships were destroyed, others that the American squadron was dispersed and the biggest fighters blown to pieces by the Spanish torpedo boats.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LAKE VOLCANO OF TAÄL.

On the day which marked the release of Fred Larkin from imprisonment, the younger officers of the *Olympia*, still stationed off Manila, planned an excursion which approximated closely to the character of an old-fashioned New England picnic party, with two exceptions: first (and this a grave one), that there were to be no girls in it; and second, also—with no pun intended—a grave one, that the participants would run some risk of being cut off by Spanish troops, and so would be in danger of losing life or liberty. Officers from the insurgent forces, however, assured their captain that they had the Spaniards closely cooped up in the city, and that by making a slight *détour* inland instead of starting as usual by the Pasig River, they would be perfectly safe; the more so as two of these native officials proposed to accompany the expedition, the object of which was to visit the famous lake-encircled volcano of Taäl.

Permission having been obtained for three days on shore, our friends Ensign Saunders, First Engineer Holmes, and Cadets Whitney, Liddon, and Calkins, with their two Philippine acquaintances, started away in high feather at sunrise, and were put ashore at a point a few miles south-west of Cavite, where they found ponies waiting, with native attendants, for the whole party as well as the substantial hamper of provisions taken. The expedition, it should be stated, was in charge of Ensign Saunders, who was expected to make a full report of his observations on the country and its people along the route.

Joking and laughing, the young officers rode through the forest toward the town of Taal. It was the first time that Sandy had set foot on shore, and he appreciated the holiday to the utmost, entirely laying aside his dignity for the time being.

"Slow down, Lat!" he sang out to the engineer as the latter galloped on ahead. "You've got an eighteen-knot nag there, and mine can only make ten at forced pressure!"

"Come on!" shouted his old comrade in return. "You're letting your fires go out!"

Here Whitney, who was just in the rear, gave Sandy's steed a sly cut, which made him almost throw his rider and sent the rest off into convulsions

of laughter as the ensign tore along the trail, clinging to his saddle for dear life.

The Filipinos exchanged glances and smiled indulgently at the boyish antics of the American officers, whom, however, with the rest of the personnel of the fleet, they had respected ever since the great naval fight which had so crippled their enemies.

Early in the evening the troop reached Taäl, and then pushed on to a small insurgent camp on the Pansipit River, where they obtained a few hours' sleep. At daybreak they were on their way in boats up-river, reaching Bombon Lake at a little after sunrise.

"Hurrah!" shouted Calkins, "there 's the old volcano, having its morning smoke!"

The Taäl was in plain sight, about seven miles away, a huge column of steam and smoke rising from its summit and spreading out like a mushroom.

"Let 's land and have some breakfast," suggested Holmes. "There 's a good place, right by the mouth of the river——"

"At the Taäl-end of the lake, added Liddon, peering innocently through his glasses at the shore.

Amid the reproachful shout which greeted his joke Saunders gave orders to land, and soon a hearty lunch was spread in the shade of a large tree growing close to the lake. Some natives timidly ap-

proached with bananas to sell, and these formed a welcome addition to the repast.

"All aboard!" called Sandy, after an hour's rest, during the latter part of which several of the party had pulled out pipes and Manila cheroots and followed the example of the volcano.

The water of the lake was found to be warm and of an unpleasant yellowish tint. There were no fish in it, the Filipinos said, but a good many crocodiles.

Reaching the island, they skirted along the shore until they came to a small hut, whose owner was evidently on the lookout for a job. He promised to guide them by the shortest and best path to the summit of the island.

"How high is this old thing, Doc, anyway?" asked Calkins, who was the laziest of the crowd.

"About nine hundred feet," replied Liddon, to whom every one naturally looked for statistics.

Up they clambered, the guide taking the lead, and Norman close upon his heels. When about half way to the summit they came to a sudden halt. A crevasse several feet in width lay directly across their path, and from its depths arose a sulphurous steam that drove the climbers backward in a hurry.

"It has opened since I was here last," said the guide in the Tagal tongue to the insurgent officers. "Come this way."

A hard scramble around to the right enabled them to pass the crevasse, and in twenty minutes more they were assembled on the brink of the crater, looking down into its vast and uncanny depths.

To use the words of one * who has recently visited the spot, and to whose account of this volcano, as well as of some other seldom visited localities of the Philippines, we are greatly indebted: "The crater was an immense cup-shaped depression, fully a mile in diameter, and about eight hundred feet deep. Its almost perpendicular walls were seamed and gashed with gullies and crevices, and they stood guard over a scene of utter desolation, unrelieved by a green leaf or blade of grass. A second and more recent crater had been built up inside of the first, but half of it had disappeared, leaving a semicircular fragment of wall standing. At the southern end of this an active cone rose somewhat sharply, and from it rolled up the immense column of vapour which had been seen from the edge of the lake.

"Within the large crater were three lakelets of strange-coloured water. One was dirty brown, one intensely yellow, and one a most brilliant emerald green. The yellow and green lakelets were boiling away steadily with a sullen roar, while the ears of the spectators were assailed by a pandemonium of

* Prof. Dean C. Worcester. See Appendix.

other sounds, the sources of which could not be made out with certainty.

“ The scarred and blackened walls, with their hissing sulphur jets, the boiling lakes with their strange colours, and the immense column of vapour combined to make a most extraordinary scene, grand in the extreme, and wholly beyond power of description.”

“ Whew!” ejaculated Sandy, wiping his brow and gazing at the spectacle which fascinated all with its very horror. “ There ’s something for your next letter, Lat! ”

“ And for your report,” laughed Norman. “ It will probably go on record as the most eloquent ever submitted to a naval commander.”

“ What ’s the matter with going down into the ring ? ” demanded Whitney. “ Let ’s see the fun, now that we ’re here.”

The Philippine gentlemen were horrified. “ Not on any account!” they exclaimed. “ It would be throwing away our lives! We should never come back.”

Saunders turned to the guide. “ It could be done,” the native said, “ though in the rainy season it would be impossible. But in any case it would be dangerous, and he strongly advised ” (with many gesticulations) “ the visitors to be content with their present view.”

The word "dangerous" was ill suited to deter the reckless young Americans from their project. Norman declared himself ready to go, and the rest all acquiesced except Calkins, who disclaimed any desire to add to his previous exertions, and remained behind with the two Filipinos.

The others, led and cautioned by the guide, who had been promised an extra fee, slowly clambered down the steep incline, and were soon crawling up the wall of the second crater, slippery with volcanic mud.

"Come on," shouted Sandy, "let 's have a look into that cone where the steam comes out."

This was really a risky undertaking, but it was accomplished, and presently three naval men were craning their necks over the edge and gazing, horror-struck and fascinated, upon the eddying chaos below. Great volumes of smoke and steam poured up from the hidden furnaces in the bowels of the earth and filled the air with their sickening fumes. Every few moments there was a crashing explosion like artillery, followed by the rattle of boulders as they were hurled against the side of the pit. That they sometimes were thrown out was evidenced by the number of loose stones lying around the edge of the crater.

"I've got enough of this," exclaimed Whitney, coughing violently as a waft of sulphurous steam

settled over them. "Here goes for the return trip!"

The rest followed in short order, their curiosity satisfied. When passing one of the boiling lakes Sandy felt the crust giving way, and barely escaped breaking through, the puff of hot steam shooting up from the aperture his boot had made telling a plain story of what the result would have been had the treacherous formation engulfed him.

"Hurry!" exclaimed Sandy, looking very pale; "13-inch gun-fire is play compared with this abominable hole!"

They picked their way back cautiously to solid ground and then attacked the almost perpendicular sides of the outer crater. It was a hard climb, and the fierce sun beat down pitilessly upon the bare rocks and the heads of the excursionists until they were almost exhausted and dripping with perspiration from head to foot. This required another halt, which perhaps would have been protracted had not the guide called their attention to a rapidly rising bank of clouds.

The party hastened to their boats, but were not half way down the lake when the rain overtook them, coming down in perfect sheets and accompanied by a furious tempest of thunder and lightning. The ponies were waiting at the landing-place on the bank of the river, but as it was now late in

the afternoon and rain was falling heavily, Saunders decided that the expedition should spend the night again at the camp. All were soaked to the skin, and Norman, in particular, was shivering until his teeth chattered as if he had the ague.

That night they sat huddled together in a rude hut, through the roof of which the rain found its way in small but steady streams. Sleep was not to be thought of. The young officers talked a while of home, and the prospects of a speedy close to the war, and then called upon their Filipino friends for stories of the volcano.

"The eruptions of 1749 and 1754 were the worst ever known," replied one of the men who was far above the average of his countrymen in intelligence. His dialect was a mixture of Spanish, English, and Tagal, which we will not attempt to reproduce, but which was perfectly understood by the Americans as he talked.

The Filipino's account of the great eruption of 1749 sounded marvellously like the younger Pliny's letter describing Vesuvius at the time of the destruction of Pompeii. Doc Liddon afterward ascertained that the story was derived in part from accounts handed down from father to son, and in part from writings of a priest, Fray Francisco Vencuchillo.

The priest stated that at about eleven o'clock at

night on the 11th of August, 1749, he saw a strong light on the top of the volcanic island, but did not take further notice. He went to sleep, when at three the next morning he heard a gradually increasing noise which he supposed proceeded from the guns of a galleon expected in Manila. He only became anxious when the number of shots he heard far exceeded the royal salute, for he had already counted a hundred times, and still it continued. He now heard the natives calling out, " Father, let us flee!" and on inquiry they cried that the island had burst.

Daylight showed an immense column of smoke pouring from the summit of the volcano, and here and there from its sides smaller streams rose like plumes. It was a magnificent sight to watch mountains of sand rising from the crater and falling again like the jets from a fountain.

But now came a powerful earthquake, turning everything in the convent topsy-turvy. The earth opened, trees were engulfed, streams found new beds, the foundations of houses were lowered or uplifted. For three weeks ashes fell like rain on the lake and surrounding country.

In 1754 the eruption culminated. Burning lava poured from fissures in the great cone. The sky was darkened with smoke and ashes, so that people in Manila dined with lighted candles at midday, and

walked the streets thunderstruck. Four towns were utterly destroyed by stones, ashes, lava, and the encroaching waters of the lake. Lightning played across the heavens and the air was rent with crashing thunders. The panic in the lake towns was like that of Pompeii, seventeen generations before, men, women, and children running screaming through the streets, falling on their knees, and calling for confession of their sins. The loss of life was great during the eight days of terror, while the actual eruption lasted over six months.

With these and other tales of the Philippines the night dragged away. In the morning the party started on their ponies for the coast. The skies were bright again, the sudden storm being but the precursor of the rainy season, the beginning of which was now close at hand.

Norman was very shivery and light-headed as he mounted his lively little steed, and his symptoms increased as the day wore on. Doctor Liddon shook his head and, falling back a little with Sandy, whispered to the latter that Holmes was "in for a fever." By nightfall, when the coast was reached, and, a little later, the *Olympia*, Norman felt very ill indeed, and was glad to accept a relief from his watch. The next day he was worse, and the ship's surgeon pronounced his case serious.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FLOATING VOLCANOES OF SANTIAGO.

“ Before the outbreak of hostilities the port defences of Santiago consisted of four antiquated forts or batteries, of which one, St. Catalina, was abandoned, and a second, Punta Blanca, was, from its position, useless. Of the other two, Morro Castle constituted the outer line and Estrella the inner one. The armament of the former consisted of five ancient mortars and two siege-guns, and the latter of two obsolete cast-iron howitzers, all of feeble power.

“ After war was declared four batteries were hastily improvised, all of weak profile, and consisting of twenty-one obsolete and twelve modern pieces, and of the latter four only are of comparatively high power.

“ The exterior line consisted of seventeen obsolete and two modern pieces, the former being furnished by the Spanish War Department and the latter by the Navy Department. The bold front put up by the former seems to have been effective. The real

strength, however, lay in the guns taken from the Reina Mercedes, so that the duel between the fleet and the land was practically fought by the navy of both powers. After one of these guns was disabled by the carriage being rendered *hors de combat* the outer defence was really confined to a single piece."

The above extract from the report of Lieut.-Col. H. D. Borup, Chief Ordnance Officer at Santiago, must be borne in mind to understand the situation of the opposing forces at that point during the siege. The absolutely unknown quantity (to the Americans) was the number and situation of torpedoes in the harbour and its approach from the sea.

"I maintained the blockade as follows," said Admiral Sampson in his report: "To the battle-ships was assigned the duty, in turn, of lighting the channel. Moving up to the port, at a distance of from one to two miles from the Morro, dependent upon the condition of the atmosphere, they threw a search-light beam directly up the channel, and held it steadily there. This lighted up the entire breadth of the channel for half a mile inside of the entrance so brilliantly that the movement of small boats could be detected.

"Why the batteries never opened fire upon the search-light ship was always a matter of surprise to me, but they never did.

"Stationed close to the entrance of the port were

three picket launches, and at a little distance farther out three small picket vessels, usually converted yachts, and, when they were available, one or two of our torpedo boats.

“ With this arrangement there was at least a certainty that nothing could get out of the harbour undetected.

“ After the arrival of the army, when the situation forced upon the Spanish Admiral a decision, our vigilance increased. The night blockading distance was reduced to two miles for all vessels, and a battleship was placed alongside the search-light ship, with her broadside trained upon the channel in readiness to fire the instant a Spanish ship should appear.”

The situation was growing daily more critical for Cervera's fleet within the harbour. On July 1st the *Oregon* and other American ships bombarded Morro Castle for three hours. On the night of July 2nd (as was afterward learned), Cervera determined to make a dash for liberty. The channel was so brilliantly lighted up, however, that he postponed the attempt until the next day.

It was a bright Sunday morning. The crew of the *Oregon* were at “ inspection quarters,” when Dave Rexdale, glancing carelessly toward the shore, saw a column of black smoke rising from the entrance to the harbour. At the same instant a signal

flag fluttered up aloft on the *Brooklyn*—"Follow the enemy and engage!"

Instantly the shrill whistle of the boatswain resounded along the decks of the *Oregon*, calling the men to "general quarters." The ship was already cleared for action, and the crew were at their posts and stripping in almost less time than it takes to tell the story.

"Cast loose and provide!" came the familiar order sharply.

There was no "sojering" now, whatever there may have been in the endless and tiresome successions of drills during the peaceful periods of the blockade.

"Jump, men!" cried Dave, setting the example with energy.

In a trice the training and elevating gear was loosed and tested; breech-blocks were thrown open like mad, power turned on the turrets, and smoke-fans started.

"Load!" And up came the huge half-ton projectiles to the tune of the clanking ammunition hoists. The hydraulic rammer pushed the first shell into its place, followed by the powder; the heavy breech-plug was swung into place and locked, and the electric wire attached to the primer.

Panting and perspiring, the crew stood ready, while the lieutenant in charge trained the gun on

the foremost Spanish ship which, leading a column of four, was vainly endeavouring to make its escape to the westward, with volumes of black smoke rolling from its stacks.

"Fire!" A crash like thunder and a belch of flame from the great floating volcano, and the mass of steel hurtled through the air, crackling and screaming, to its prey. Meanwhile the rapid-fire guns of the secondary batteries, and of all the other American ships, were pouring shells and solid shot into the frenzied and doomed Spaniards.

Their four large warships, the *Maria Teresa*, *Viscaya*, *Almirante Oquendo*, and *Cristobal Colon*, were followed by the torpedo-boat destroyers *Furor* and *Pluton*. These were at once furiously attacked at short range by the little *Gloucester*, which sank them both in twenty minutes.

Of the large ships, the *Maria Teresa*, Cervera's flagship, was the first to be put out of the fight. She was pierced through and through with shells from the *Texas* and *Brooklyn*, and was soon a mass of flames. Water poured in through the shot-holes, and the engineer was signalled to start the pumps. There was no response. Every man in that part of the ship had been killed. She was beached, and amid the roar of flames and the crashing explosions of ammunition her surviving men climbed over her sides to escape. But insurgent rifles were waiting

for them on shore and the waters swarmed with sharks. At that moment half a dozen boats from the American squadron dashed up, and with their desire for victory suddenly changed into ardour to save life, the crews began to rescue the living and dying men they had just been trying to kill. Many deeds of bravery were performed, some of the Americans even climbing upon the decks of the burning ship to save the wounded. Cervera himself was taken to the flagship, where he was received on board with a full admiral's guard, the crew (who doubtless remembered his treatment of Hobson) cheering him wildly. Dripping, disconsolate, half-clad, the Spanish Admiral turned away with tears in his eyes.

Meanwhile the rest of the Spanish vessels, save one, had fared no better than the flagship.

"Fire deliberately and don't waste a shot!" signalled Schley, who, in the absence of Admiral Sampson, a dozen miles away, was in command.

The *Oquendo* met the fate of the *Teresa*. Bursting into flames she ran ashore within half a dozen miles of the harbour's mouth. The scenes of rescue were repeated, over three hundred men being taken off by the Americans and well cared for on the *Iowa*.

It was now the turn of the *Vizcaya*, the beautiful ship that a few short months before had ridden so

proudly in the harbour of New York. She tried to ram the *Brooklyn*, but in vain. The *Oregon* rained thunderbolts upon her, and the *Brooklyn* kept up a steady fire until Captain Eulate gave orders to haul down the flag, and beached her twenty miles from Santiago.

While the *Brooklyn* was thus engaged in the destruction of the enemy's ships, Commodore Schley frequently sent orderlies down to the stoke-holes and engine-room, where the men were working in a temperature of nearly 200° Fahrenheit, and kept them informed of the progress of the fight.

On the bridge Yeoman Ellis, a bright lad from Brooklyn, was standing near the Commodore.

"What is the range of the *Viscaya*?" the latter asked.

"Seventeen hundred yards," replied the young sailor.

"It must be more than that, I think."

"I just took it, sir," replied Ellis, "but I'll try it again."

He stepped a few feet to one side and was raising the instrument to his eye, when a shell struck him full in the face. Brave Yeoman Ellis was the only American killed that day!

Just at this time a deed of splendid daring was performed below decks, on the same ship. Captain Cook, her commander, tells the story thus:

“ A cartridge became jammed in the bore of the starboard forward 6-pounder, and in the effort to withdraw it the case became detached from the projectile, leaving the latter fast in the bore and impossible to extract from the rear.

“ Corporal Gray, of the port gun, asked and obtained permission to attempt to drive the shell out with the rammer. To do this it was necessary to go out on the gun, hanging over the water, and the undertaking was full of difficulties and danger, the latter due in a great measure to the blast of the 8-inch turret guns firing overhead.

“ The gun was hot, and it was necessary to cling to the ‘ Jacob’s Ladder ’ with one hand while endeavouring to manipulate the long rammer with the other. After a brave effort he was forced to give up and was ordered in.

“ Quarter-Gunner Smith then came, and promptly placed himself in the dangerous position outside the gun-port, where he worked and failed, as the corporal had done. Neither had been able to get the rammer into the bore, and there seemed nothing left to do but to dismount the gun.

“ At this juncture Private MacNeal, one of the gun’s crew, volunteered to go out and make a final effort. The gun was so important, the starboard battery being engaged, that, as a forlorn hope, he was permitted to make the attempt.

“ He pushed boldly out and set to work. The guns of the forward 8-inch turret were firing, almost knocking him overboard, and the enemy's shots were coming with frequency into his immediate neighbourhood.

“ At this time the chief yeoman was killed. MacNeal never paused in his work. The rammer was finally placed in the bore and the shell ejected, and MacNeal resumed his duties as coolly as if what he had done were a matter of every-day routine.”

And now but one vessel of the proud Spanish fleet remained. The *Cristobal Colon*, crowding on every possible pound of steam, had distanced her sister ships and had a fair start of the Americans. If she could pass Cape Cruz she might escape. Seeing her course the *Brooklyn* and *Oregon* started after her.

For an hour the chase held on, the pursuers steadily gaining. Fresh from her fourteen-thousand-mile voyage as if she had just left the dock, the great battleship of the North-west surged onward at incredible speed, outdoing her own trial record. At last the welcome signal appeared on the flagship's halliards. At the same time an officer approached the captain and begged him to fire one of the big turret guns to cheer the men who were toiling in the bowels of the ship, making the furnaces burn as they never burned before.

Boom ! and the huge shell left the battleship, striking the water behind the *Colon*. Rexdale and the men under him were wild with excitement as they watched the chase. Would she escape ?

Another roar from the 13-inch gun. Four miles the projectile flew through the air and fell just ahead of the *Colon*. The *Brooklyn's* 8-inch guns now spoke out, and wounded the desperate, fleeing ship above her armour-belt. Then both pursuers fired at once, the *Colon* feebly returning shot for shot.

The terrible monsters of the deep drew nearer and nearer. Shot after shot tore the water into cascades around her, or beat upon her steel sides. More and more slowly she staggered onward. At last the Spanish flag came down with a run, the ship was turned shoreward, and she was flooded and sunk by her crew to prevent her from falling into the hands of the Yankees. The naval battle of Santiago was ended, and Cervera's fleet, like Montojo's, was destroyed.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

WOUNDED TO DEATH.

In the trenches! When the young volunteer is starting for the war, marching down the familiar streets between dense lines of cheering lookers-on; when the band plays "The Girl I Left behind Me," and the girl herself, bless her sweet face! leans forward over the rope to wave her handkerchief, and the strains of music and the shouting of the crowd cannot drown the unspoken words she sends right to his heart with a glance of her blue eyes; then, indeed, the boy feels that a soldier's life is a glorious one, and he is glad he enlisted.

But in the trenches! Standing ankle-deep in yellow mud, beat upon by a broiling sun throughout the day, drenched by cold and pitiless rain at night; with fever lurking in the camp and sharpshooters hiding in front for an exposed head or limb to become their target; with unclean birds of prey waiting patiently in the tree-tops not far away, and loathsome land-crabs scuttling among the gravel and fallen leaves,—this is another thing.

In their trenches before Santiago the Americans bore their trials with a fortitude that surpassed even their splendid courage on the battlefield. They smoked their pipes and laughed and joked as they roasted their coffee-berries and prepared their scanty rations of bacon and hard-tack. Always on the alert for a sudden sally of the enemy, exposed to extremes of hot and cold, wet and dry, they met the fortunes of the day as soldiers should, and more and more closely drew their lines about the city, which now looked dolefully out upon the empty harbour and bewailed the loss of the stout ships of war that lay smouldering on the shore without.

An edict had gone forth that the women and children, all non-combatants, old and young, could leave Santiago and take refuge where they pleased. Thousands of the helpless inhabitants, driven from their homes by starvation and fear of sudden death, accepted the permission and streamed out of the city towards El Caney, now occupied by American troops. Mothers bearing their babies in their arms stumbled along the miry road; invalids, delicate ladies of high birth, white-haired men, all with faces pinched by famine or worn by disease and anxiety, swelled the throng of refugees.

The army, nobly seconded by Clara Barton and her Red Cross aids, did their best to supply the wants of the suffering and exiled people, but the means

were not adequate. The soldiers themselves were on scant rations—how could they feed the multitude ?

Mingling with the fugitives were the wounded Americans returning from the front, some on crutches, some borne on stretchers, some supported by their comrades. Their courage and good cheer was marvellous.

" You 're walking back to Siboney ? " inquired Fred Larkin of one of the cripples. " Could n't you ride ? "

" Guess not! They wanted all the riding room for worse cases 'n mine. Thank God, my two wounds are both in the same leg, so I can walk quite spry. They told me I 'd be better off down t' the landing, so I got these crutches an' made a break. "

" And how are you getting on ? "

" Good and easy, " he replied cheerfully. And with one sound leg and two sticks he moved on.

The next morning Fred heard that General Garcia was throwing out his forces to the west and north to intercept Spanish reinforcements. It was probable that a sally might be made from the trenches, and a lively fight seemed more than possible. The reporter determined to " take it in, " as he expressed it. He obtained a pass from headquarters, and, making a détour to the southward, was soon within

the insurgent lines. The men were scattered along a mile or more on the mountain slopes, and were eager for sight of the enemy. Aspersions had been cast on their bravery in some of the Northern newspapers, and their leaders were determined that the half-starved, ill-clad, but desperate men under their command should prove themselves good fighters.

During the forenoon nothing of note occurred. Fred chafed under the inaction and seriously thought of returning to camp, where negotiations were understood to be in progress between Shafter and Toral.

At about three in the afternoon a scout rushed up to the Cuban headquarters with the announcement that two companies of Spanish troops were advancing from the trenches. Instantly all was activity in the insurgent camp. No bugles were blown nor loud commands given, but the men massed themselves behind boulders and fallen trees along the trail by which the regulars must arrive. It was to be an ambushade, Fred saw, and he could not help pitying the Spaniards who were about to walk into it.

It was no time for sentiment, however, and the reporter ensconced himself snugly behind a big rock just in the rear of the insurgents, and note-book in hand awaited the result of the attack.

Before long the hum of voices was heard, and the

tramping of many feet. The advance-guard of the sally-party came in sight, peering anxiously along the road for signs of the enemy.

Nearer and nearer they came. Then with a wild yell like the Indians of the plains the insurgents were upon their prey.

It soon appeared that although the Spaniards were taken by surprise the affair was to be no rout, but a stand-up fight. The regulars resisted nobly, rallying to their officers' command and pouring a hot fire into the thickets where the Cubans were still half hidden.

So desperate was the resistance that the latter fell back, leaving a dozen dead or wounded in the brush. Again they rallied, and the Spaniards began slowly to retreat. The fight drifted along the trail for half a mile, until, with one more deadly volley at their assailants who far outnumbered them, the regulars broke and fled for the bay, where boats were waiting to transfer them to the city.

As the sound of the conflict, the crackle of the musketry, and the shouts of the combatants grew fainter and fainter, Fred Larkin completed his notes and put the book in his pocket again.

He stepped cautiously out into the road, pausing more than once to gaze ruefully on a dead soldier or to stoop and ease the position of a wounded man.

"Well," he said to himself, with a long breath,

"it's over, and I may as well get back to camp and write up my notes. Hullo!"

This exclamation was caused by the appearance of a tree which at no recent date had been struck by lightning or broken by a gale, and had fallen in a peculiar way across the boughs of another so as to roof the path completely with its thick foliage. He instantly remembered that tree. He had passed under it with Antonio and his daughter on the way to the coast, five weeks before.

He paused irresolutely. The impulse was strong upon him to follow the path up to that little mountain hut, a mile away. Then he remembered his duty to his employers.

"It's no use," he said to himself grimly. "I must not risk throwing away the story of this fight. And if I should come to grief this time, I'd deserve to be shot. Perhaps she is n't there, anyway."

With this scant consolation he set his face toward the sea and started down the path at a good pace.

He had not gone a hundred yards when a pitiful moan fell upon his ear. It seemed to come from a clump of bushes at the foot of a high bank close beside the path. With one hand upon his revolver he pushed aside the branches with the other, bringing to view a soldier propped against a boulder, and wearing a torn and mud-stained Spanish uniform. His cap lay beside him, and the design and number

upon it told that the wearer was one of the troop that had just been beaten back. His head was drooping upon his chest, against which one hand was tightly pressed.

Fred surveyed the wounded man gloomily for a moment.

"I'm sorry, poor chap," he said, "but I don't see that I can do anything for you. Hard luck!"

The soldier raised his head, and Fred saw that he could not be over seventeen or eighteen. His lips quivered pitifully.

"*Agua! Agua!*" he murmured, gasping for a breath. "*Me muero de sed*"—"I am dying of thirst."

"Have n't a drop," said Larkin, shaking his head. "Hold on, though; here 's some *aguardiente*, if that will do you any good."

He took from his pocket the small brandy-flask he always carried, but seldom found occasion to use while in the field, and, kneeling, held it to the other's lips.

The lad took one choking swallow, and, revived for the moment, tried to rise. Larkin put his arm about him and steadied him, as with great difficulty he gained his feet and stared wildly around. His wound was evidently serious, if not fatal. His face was pale as death and his hand remained tightly clutching his breast.

Fred saw his hopeless and dazed look, and found it impossible to leave him there, swaying on his feet and mutely appealing for help with those great, agonised brown eyes. But where could he take the young soldier? The insurgents, whose tender mercies to Spanish prisoners were but too well known to their allies, lay between him and Santiago. It was miles over a rough road to the American lines or the sea.

"*¿Qué me dice Usted que haga, señor?*"—"What must I do, sir?"—gasped the boy, striving to stand without aid, as the sun beat down on his curly head.

Fred understood the drift of the question and looked puzzled. Suddenly an inspiration came to him.

"Come along—*Venga—venga Usted por aquí*"—"come this way"—said the reporter, stumbling over the Spanish words. Holding the other firmly under the shoulders, he began to lead him slowly up the path.

The young soldier submitted, though it was plain that every step was torture. As Fred looked at him and supported his trembling form, he realised that there were two sides to the war; that there were Spanish mothers and sweethearts waiting and mourning beyond the sea for the boyish conscripts who were fighting because they were forced to bear

arms, with no understanding of the cause at issue; and he wished for the twentieth time, in spite of the opportunities the war had afforded him, that the trouble had been settled amicably.

Slowly, painfully, the two made their way upward. After the first half-hour the boy's weight on Fred's arm increased.

"Cheer up, old man! It 's only a little way now. I can almost see the cabin," urged Fred, forgetting that his charge could not understand a word of English.

The boyish soldier pressed his pale lips more firmly together, and with a look in his eyes half grateful, half appealing, like a hurt dog's, laboured on.

At last his breath came in shorter gasps. His hand, clutching his breast, was stained, as well as his uniform. He staggered, reeled, and would have fallen had not Larkin supported his whole weight.

"*Non — puedo — andar — mas*"—"I can go no farther"—he whispered.

Fred looked up the path. Through the dense foliage he could see the little clearing he knew so well. He stooped and lifted the Spaniard in his arms and moved on. The trail was rough, and soon he had to rest. The wounded man's eyes were closed, and Fred was afraid his efforts to save

him were after all in vain. The clutch of the small, olive-coloured hand had relaxed.

Again he was lifted tenderly and borne forward, his head resting on the other's shoulder, like a child's.

The clearing was gained at last. There was the hut, and, thank God! a light smoke was curling upward from the chimney, showing that the occupants were at home.

Fred toiled up the path to the door, which stood wide open. Entering the front room so familiar to him, he knelt on the floor, with the soldier's form resting against his own.

With exclamations of surprise old Antonio and the Spanish girl started up from the bench beside the fire.

"*Qué—*" began Cueva; then abruptly paused and gazed at the uniformed figure.

The girl's face had brightened at sight of Fred, but as her glance rested on the pale face that lay against his shoulder, a sudden look of anguish came into the brown eyes.

She sprang forward, and turned the unconscious face to the light, without a word to Fred. Then with a wild cry, "*Pedro! Pedro!*" she caught the dying boy to her arms.

At the sound of her voice he opened his eyes and met hers. A wonderfully sweet smile and a look

like that of a very little child came into his thin face as he whispered, "*Isa ! Padre mio !*"

Then, smiling still, he fell back in her arms, dead.

So Pedro found his father and Isa.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE FALL OF SANTIAGO.

Midsummer slowly drags its length through the long, drowsy days at Magnolia. Still the guests of the great hotel by the sea eagerly read the papers and from the end piazza scan the offing, not for hostile ships—for the proud navy of Spain is at the bottom of the sea, save the few remaining vessels which, under Admiral Camara, are traversing the Mediterranean in a futile demonstration against Dewey—but for returning transports. A cloud of smoke is seen, and a long, low-lying steamship crawls along the horizon, and word is passed that it is the great ocean liner carrying the prisoners from Cervera's fleet to Portsmouth.

Hallie and Anemone sit under the pines, one reading aloud, the other listening; but each, in her heart, thinking of the "navy blue" uniforms far away.

Miss Letitia is induced one day to join the bathers, and is an awesome object in her bathing-suit and

broad-brimmed hat. It seems, however, that she can swim, which she does energetically for five minutes, and then recuperates with her niece in a sun-bath in the sand under the piazza of the bathing pavilion.

Gradually the country realises that the war is nearing its end, and confidence in the Government is unbounded. Two hundred thousand dollars' worth of bonds are offered at Washington, as a war-loan, and the public subscriptions to them amount to over a million, such is the eagerness to obtain the low-interest Treasury paper.

At Santiago messages pass to and fro between the hostile camps, and the white flag is almost as abundant as the Stars and Stripes or the red and yellow. The Spanish soldiers, subsisting on half-rations of rice, stand grimly at their posts; the Americans joke at their increasing hardships, but man the trenches night and day. There is a shadow on their commander's brow, for yellow fever has broken out among the troops and a hundred cases of the dread disease are reported. Impatient despatches fly over the wires from Washington and Madrid; Sampson promises to support a land attack by dropping one of his huge shells in the city streets every two minutes. Shafter gathers his forces for a last demand, delaying the bombardment and assault to save life if possible. Toral, urged by his wounded

superior, vainly begs for point after point of privilege, and the American guns are shotted for the final scene of destruction.

In the sick-bay of the *Olympia*, at anchor in the bay of Manila, Norman Holmes tosses and turns on his cot, alternately shivering and burning with fever. Sandy avails himself of every moment of freedom from his official duties to nurse the sick man, and Liddon peers solemnly at him through his glasses. More than once the kind-hearted Admiral, too, visits the young engineer, and bids the stewards leave nothing undone for his comfort.

The nation is still thrilled by the exploits of this masterful naval commander, and the story of the great combat is told over and over in every city and village of the United States, from the evening circle of gossips in the corner grocery to the platform of the mass-meeting in the crowded square of the metropolis. But few know the gentleness and simple Christian faith of the great man's character. Here and there, in some obscure New England hamlet, is a sorrowing mother or anxious wife or sweetheart who can bear witness to it. Such an one is she who received this letter, not long after a night attack on the American forces on shore:

"OLYMPIA, FLAGSHIP, MANILA.

"*My dear Mrs. N.*—I wish to express to you my deepest sympathy. It must lessen your sorrow

somewhat to know that your young husband fell fighting bravely for his country, the noblest death a man can know.

"From the *Olympia* I watched the fight that fearful night and wondered how many American homes would be saddened by the martyrdom suffered by our brave men, and my sympathy went out to each and every one of them.

"Your loss has been sadder than the others and I am unable to express the sorrow I feel for you. Tears came to my eyes as I read the sad story of the father who never saw his child and then the loss of all that was left to the brave mother.

"It is hard sometimes to believe, but our Heavenly Father, in His infinite goodness, always does things for the best, and some day father, mother, and daughter will be joined never again to be parted. With my tenderest sympathy, believe me, your sincere friend,

"GEORGE DEWEY."

Fred Larkin's astonishment was only equalled by his sympathy when he found that the dying man he had laid at Isabella's feet was the brother for whose coming she had so long waited and prayed. The girl's grief was intense as, sobbing, she held the lifeless form to her heart. Fred longed to comfort her, but knew that words were idle.

The old father, who had stood motionless during this terrible scene, was the first to recover at least an outward show of composure.

"He has died nobly," he said, in his own tongue, with the old Castilian spirit flashing from his dark eyes. "He has given his life for his country."

He took the lad tenderly in his arms, and refusing all assistance carried him into the adjoining room and laid him upon Isa's bed.

"Remain here," said he, simply, to Fred. "There is a good priest not far from here. I will bring him to administer the last rites of the Holy Church to—to the dead."

He could not pronounce his boy's name, and for a moment it seemed that he would break down. With great effort, however, he recovered his self-command, and strode out of the hut. Isabella betook herself to the little chamber of death, and shut herself in with her brother.

Hour after hour Fred waited, musing on the strange chance that had brought him originally to the hut, and had chosen him to reunite, so pitifully, the broken family. Once a band of insurgents passed, and he concealed himself in the loft, thinking it best to take no chances of possible recognition by Rodriguez, who might turn up in the rebel camp at any time. The men passed with only a glance at the hut, it being well known that though a

Spaniard, Cueva was a non-combatant, and in any case so poor as to render the premises not worth pillaging. The rough attentions of Rodriguez, unwelcome to their object as they were, had proved a safeguard about the pretty daughter, as no one cared to incur the displeasure of that mysterious chieftain who came and went between the lines as he pleased.

At nightfall Antonio returned, accompanied by the reverend father, a gentle, white-haired old man, who seemed a part of some dim-vaulted cathedral in ancient Spain, and strangely out of place in this mountain solitude, amid scenes of warfare and carnage. Candles were lighted at the head of the bed where the dead soldier lay, and the priest took Isa's place, muttering prayers for the soul of the departed.

A fire was kindled in the outer room, and the girl, a deep sob now and then shaking her slender frame, silently set about her preparations for the evening meal. It was too late for the reporter to return to camp, and he resigned himself to the situation, trying now and then, not wholly in vain, to speak words of good cheer to his afflicted hosts.

No one retired during the night. Fred dozed with his head on the table, while from time to time the father and daughter conversed in low tones or mingled their tears over their common loss. From

the adjoining room occasionally rose the low murmur of a prayer as the good priest woke and remembered his sacred office.

At last the candle-light paled before the dawn. Inexpressibly wearied and heavy of heart, Fred took the hands of Antonio and Isa, bidding them farewell. He assured the latter most earnestly that as soon as the inevitable surrender of the city occurred he would seek her out and lend such aid as was possible to her father and herself.

Isa shook her head sadly and buried her face in her hands as he turned away. Long before noon he was in the American camp and his latest despatches on the way to the landing, near which the press-boat was anchored.

The negotiations between the two military commanders proceeded slowly. Toral offered to surrender the city of Santiago if his troops might be allowed to depart with the honours of war. Whereupon General Shafter telegraphed:

" Hon. Secretary of War :

" I forwarded General Toral's proposition to evacuate the town this morning, without consulting anyone. Since then I have seen the general officers commanding divisions, who agree with me that it should be accepted.

" First, it releases at once the harbour.

" Second, it permits the return of thousands of

women, children, and old men, who have left the town fearing bombardment, and who are suffering where they are, though I am doing my best to supply them with food.

“ Third, it saves the great destruction of property which a bombardment would entail, most of which belongs to Cubans and foreign residents.

“ Fourth, it at once relieves the command, while it is in good health, for operations elsewhere.

“ There are now three cases of yellow fever at Siboney, in Michigan regiment, and if it gets started no one knows where it will stop.

“ We will lose by this simply some prisoners we do not want and the arms they carry. I believe many of them will desert and return to our lines. I was told by a sentinel who deserted last night that two hundred men wanted to come, but were afraid our men would fire upon them.

“ W. R. SHAFER, General.”

The reply from Washington, two hours later, was sharp and to the point:

“ After careful consideration by the President and Secretary of War, I am directed to say that you have been repeatedly advised that you would not be expected to make an assault upon the enemy at Santiago until you were prepared to do the work thoroughly.

“ When you are ready this will be done.

“ Your telegram of this morning said your position was impregnable and that you believed the enemy would yet surrender unconditionally. You have also assured us that you could force their surrender by cutting off supplies.

“ Under these circumstances, your message recommending that Spanish troops be permitted to evacuate and proceed without molestation to Holguin is a great surprise, and is not approved.

“ The responsibility of destruction and distress to the inhabitants rests entirely with the Spanish commander. Reinforcements are on the way, of which you have already been advised. In the meantime, nothing is lost by holding the position you have now and which you regard as impregnable.”

On the 11th of July the main aqueduct leading to the city was cut by the Americans, yielding them an abundance of excellent water, of which they had now deprived the enemy.

“ The American lines,” continues the historian, “ extended around the city in the shape of a horse-shoe five miles in length. The side of the hills facing the city was a succession of bomb-proof rifle-pits, trenches, and redoubts, looking like the openings of so many mines, and threatening to turn the Spanish works into pits of death. General Garcia, with the Cubans, hitherto of little service, had been

thrown out on the roads of approach from the west to cut off reinforcements seeking to enter the city, which was not invested on that side.

“ On the 12th General Toral sent a defiant message, saying in effect that if the Americans wanted Santiago they could come and take it. Unconditional surrender, he declared, was unreasonable and impossible, and he was ready to meet an attack whenever the invading army chose to make one.

“ The white flag which had been flying over the city during the truce was withdrawn, and defiance was the order of the day.”

With many people in the States this bold front was effectual, and fears for our army, weakened by scant rations and continued exposure in the trenches, and infected by the dreaded disease of the tropics, were widely entertained. Reproaches were heaped upon the heads of those who had planned the Santiago campaign. The arrival of General Miles, a soldier of long experience in the Civil War and among the Indians of the West, no doubt served to strengthen the resolve of the American leaders, which may well have faltered in the face of so determined a resistance on the part of the enemy and the troubles of their own army.

“ We shall open fire upon you to-morrow,” wrote General Shafter to Toral.

At the final word the card-house of that splendid

Spanish defiance tumbled to the ground. The city was surrendered unconditionally, twelve thousand prisoners were taken, and as many more virtually disarmed by the terms of the agreement.

At exactly nine o'clock on the morning of Monday, July 18th, the Spanish flag on Morro Castle was lowered. At the same time "Shafter and his generals, with mounted escorts, rode over the trenches to the open ground, midway to the Spanish works. On the crests of the heights beyond the several regiments of the army were drawn up under arms; comprising, as they did, a total of over twenty thousand men, and extending along seven miles of intrenchments, they formed an imposing spectacle.

"On reaching the selected ground, General Shafter found confronting him General Toral and his staff, all mounted and in full uniform, followed by a select detachment of Spanish troops.

"The scene that followed was dramatic and picturesque. General Shafter, with his generals and their staffs grouped immediately in their rear, and the troops of cavalymen with drawn sabres on the left, advanced to meet his vanquished foe.

"A few words of courteous greeting passed and then the American General returned General Toral his sword, with words of compliment which seemed to touch him deeply."

At noon the closing scene of the surrender took

place before the palace. The red-and-yellow banner which had floated over it for nearly four centuries fluttered slowly downward, and against the clear midsummer skies, above the roofs of desolate Santiago, waved the Stars and Stripes of the land of freedom, the United States of America.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PORTO RICO AND MANILA.

With the fall of Santiago it was evident that the hopes of the Spaniards were crushed. They still made a show of resistance, but they plainly understood that their rule in Cuba was at an end.

At about this time Rexdale mailed to Hallie Holmes a letter, from which an extract may not come amiss.

" You remember that when I was detached from the *Eagle*," he wrote, " I told you that now she would be sure to be in a lovely fight ? Well, ma'am, the expected has happened. There *was* a lovely fight—and I was n't in it ! It seems that two days before the surrender of Santiago the *Eagle* was cruising off the coast, and shortly before noon sighted a large steamer in the act of chasing three prizes of the U.S.S. *Dixie*. The *Eagle* started full speed in chase, it being supposed that the enemy's vessel was the Spanish armed steamer *Montevideo*, for which the *Eagle* was then on the lookout in ac-

cordance with information contained in a telegram from the Secretary of the Navy to the commandant of the naval base at Key West.

" As soon as the *Eagle* appeared in sight this steamer gave up the chase of the *Dixie's* prizes and ran for the N.W. part of the bight between the Isle of Pines and Cape Francis, the *Eagle* chasing and heading to cut her off. In about an hour's time the steamer ran aground on a shoal off Piedro's Point. From reliable information received later, it was learned that she was bound to La Colima, and was only a few hundred yards from a good channel when she struck.

" A small white side-wheel steamer which had been lying close inshore ran out to and alongside the steamer at once, but left in less than half an hour when the *Eagle*, which had run into very shoal water over an uneven bottom, dropped anchor and opened fire on the steamer at a distance of a little over a mile.

" According to the chart, the *Eagle* should then have been hard and fast aground, the hydrography (there 's a long word for you, Miss!) in this locality on the chart being entirely inaccurate.

" Just before our opening fire the river steamer left and steamed about to the northward, and as soon as the guns began to speak started for the channel inside the San Filipe Cays, followed by an

occasional shot from the U.S. ship. It was observed that two large guns were mounted forward on the steamer, and as the *Eagle's* fire was not answered from these a volunteer armed boat's crew, with the executive officer in charge, was sent ahead to board the steamer, if it was found safe to do so, and to take possession of her as a prize. At the same time the anchor was lifted and the *Eagle* felt her way slowly in toward the steamer, with a boat's crew ahead to sound out a channel.

"When within six hundred yards of the steamer the armed boat's crew was seen to board without opposition. The *Eagle's* anchor was then dropped and a second boat's crew sent to aid the first.

"It was then discovered (think of it, Hallie!) that the vessel was the Spanish armed steamer *Santo Domingo*, with two 4.72-inch breech-loading Hontoria rifles, protected by shields, mounted forward; and that she was simply packed with live stock, provisions, clothing, and other supplies for the enemy, and that she had two 12-inch breech-loading rifles in her hold!

"All fires in her furnaces were going full blast (I wonder what Norman would say to that!) with steam blowing off at 170 pounds and no water showing in her gauges! Fires were immediately hauled by the prize crew. Lunch had been served and only half eaten when the four officers, crew of

seventy-eight men, and the sixty-six male passengers deserted her and left in the river steamer above referred to. They went in such haste that few private effects were taken and none of the cargo was disturbed. Her two guns were loaded ready for firing, and her magazine was open. Had these guns been used she could have given the *Eagle* a warm reception!

“ The fire from the *Eagle's* 6-pounders was very destructive, many shells striking and exploding above and below the water-line and doing great damage. An inventory of the vessel and cargo estimated her value at nearly nine hundred thousand dollars. Was n't it just my luck not to be there when she was taken ?

“ As there were no other United States vessels within a distance of two hundred miles to help get the prize off, and several Spanish gunboats were known to be hovering near, they had to burn the prize.”

Hallie, on her part, is very thankful for every engagement in which Dave does *not* take part, and in her next letter tells him so, severely; at which Dave, reading the little note in the privacy of his cabin on the *Oregon*, laughs aloud, knowing that she is the most patriotic of girls, and would not for the world have her lover go a yard out of his course to avoid a battle to which his duty called him.

At the city wharves of Santiago the Red Cross steamer *City of Texas* was now unloading her stores of provisions for the needy. The streets were gladdened with bright faces; there was a general feeling that better times were at hand for the long-suffering inhabitants.

Not long after the surrender, Fred Larkin was on his way to one of the large markets, to "write up" the new condition of affairs, when his eye rested on a slender figure, accompanied by a Sister of Charity who had a basket on her arm. He hastened his steps, and one peep at the sad, sweet face of the young girl satisfied him of her identity.

"Señorita!" he exclaimed, raising his hat.

The good Sister frowned, supposing him a stranger. But the girl's face lighted up.

"Ah! Señor Larkeen!"

"But how—why are you here?"

Tears came into the brown eyes. "My father," she said simply,—“he could not bear it. Three days after you left us, he died. Fray Bartolomeo, the good priest, brought me to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, where the Sisters are caring for me. I am alone! alone!”

She clasped her little hands, and the tears fell on them.

"But—but you are not a—a nun?" stammered Fred, turning pale.

" Ah, no! Not yet. Perhaps, perhaps I may take the veil."

" Don't do it yet!" said Fred in English, glancing apprehensively at the Sister. " Wait till I've had a little talk with you. May I call at the convent?"

The Sister at first shook her head coldly, but when Isa told the story of her dying brother she relented, and looking in Fred's honest, manly face consented to an interview with her charge—in presence of a Sister, *of course*.

Fred's face fell a little as Isabella translated this; a bit of mischief coming into her eyes, still wet with tears, as she strongly accented the two last words. With the southern races tears and laughter are close companions, and always ready. Fred knew this and did not misjudge the girl. Her joy and relief at seeing him were plain, and he would not have been human had he not felt his heart beat faster as she looked up trustfully in his face.

" I will come to-morrow. Good-by till then," he said, holding out his hand.

" *A mas ver!*" she returned shyly; and, with her escort, mingled with the crowd.

Fred made the promised call, but it was bad enough to have an elderly Sister seated primly at Isabella's side, without our adding to the number of spectators and listeners. It is certain that the

young man talked long and earnestly with the pretty Spaniard, and before leaving had obtained a promise that, being now alone in the world, she would come to the States if he could find a real home for her there. Otherwise, she saw no refuge but the convent.

Before retiring that night Fred wrote a long letter to Mrs. Holmes (to whom he had already described his adventure on the mountain), asking her if she could not receive *Señorita Cueva*, for a time at least, in some capacity, in her own home. He begged most earnestly that she would do so, and more than hinted his own great interest in the young girl. Could she not pay her expenses by teaching Miss Hallie and Miss Anemone Spanish? She was so modest and sweet and retiring in disposition that he thought she would not upset the Newbury Street household.

As Isabella had promised to take no rash step before he had time to hear from Boston, Fred, having sealed and double-stamped his letter, went to bed feeling more easy. The very next day he had to "hustle" to join the expedition to Porto Rico.

Uncle Sam was determined, it seemed, not to do things by halves. Two Spanish fleets had been sunk, the territory and army of Eastern Cuba were captured, but the fair island of Porto Rico, the "rich haven," remained under the red and yellow.

Whatever disposition should be made of Cuba and the Philippines, the authorities at Washington resolved to take and keep this fertile and wealth-producing isle as an offset to the expenses of the war.

General Miles, with an army of picked troops, convoyed by ships of Sampson's fleet, sailed on the 21st of July, landed at a point on the southern coast of Porto Rico after a bombardment of the town by the *Gloucester*, and started on the march to San Juan. His progress was more like a triumphal procession than an invasion by a hostile force. Ponce was surrendered without a shot, and the Americans were welcomed with shouts of joy from the people.

At Yanco the mayor proclaimed: " This is a day of glorious remembrance for each son of this beloved isle, because for the first time there waves over it the flag of stars, planted in the name of the United States of America by the Major-General of the American army, Señor Miles. Citizens, long live the Government of the United States of America! Hail to its valiant troops! Hail, Porto Rico, always American! "

A little later the Spanish forces began to show a more decided spirit of resistance. Several slight skirmishes took place, and on August 13th the opposing troops were in battle array, with loaded

guns, near Guayama, when a lieutenant in blue uniform dashed up to the American batteries, waving his hand.

"Cease action! Cease action!" he shouted. "The war is over! The protocol for peace was signed yesterday!"

The officer's message was correct, and intelligence of the cessation of hostilities was forwarded to the combatants on both sides as swiftly as possible. It did not reach the Philippines, however, in time to forestall the fall of Manila.

The inhabitants of the city were starving; horses and dogs were eagerly sought for food. Sickness, due to privations and impure water and aggravated by the rains which fell daily, was prevalent. The Spanish officers in command held out bravely, but the end was near.

A fierce sally was made from the city in the midst of a genuine tropical typhoon; but men from Pennsylvania and Utah and California were behind the American guns, and the Spaniards, after three days' intermittent fighting, retired.

On the 9th of August, the city having been warned and summoned to surrender, the ships began to strip for action. Norman could hear the men running to and fro, and longed to be at his post, but although the fever had abated he was too weak to move, and had to lie helpless in the sick-bay, into

which his messmates occasionally dodged to keep their comrade posted as to current events.

On the 13th, the day after the protocol was signed at Washington, the warships opened fire, at first purposely refraining from damaging the city; then, as no token of yielding came from the haughty Spaniards, throwing shells among the batteries and buildings with terrible effect. At last the *Olympia* signalled "Cease firing!" and, not long afterward, "The enemy has surrendered."

While the bombardment was in progress, an attack was made on the city by the land forces under General Merritt. There was sharp fighting in the suburbs, and loss of life on both sides; but the afternoon brought repose. Seven thousand prisoners were surrendered to the United States in this, the last action of the war.

"PEACE! PEACE!" shouted the newsboys in the city streets, displaying the great black head-lines, just as they had cried "War!" a few months before.

"Peace!" called out neighbour to neighbour as they boarded the train to their country homes.

"Peace!" whispered thousands of faithful, devoted women, with trembling lips, throughout the land.

"Peace!" murmured the fever-stricken soldiers in hospital and camp, with feeble cheers from the strongest.

“Peace!” fluttered the signals from ship to ship in the great squadrons at Manila and Santiago and San Juan.

“*Paz!*” came the faint echo from the wearied, stricken nation across the sea; sore, wounded, distracted, penniless,—but no less proud than when her Armada of old braved the perils of the sea and found their last resting-place beneath its waters.

CHAPTER XXXII.

SNOW-BOUND.

The great hotel at Magnolia is deserted, save by a few workmen who hammer and plane and break down partitions and put up new ones, in pursuance of the proprietor's plans for improvements. He has had a prosperous season, very. People of the best families have sought admission to the mammoth inn at various times during the summer, and have actually been turned away for want of accommodations; other people of the best families having had foresight to engage rooms and even seats in the dining-room months and months beforehand.

The sea, with a new tone in its voice, beats heavily and coldly upon the shore where pretty Dorothy sat in the moonlight (and her golf cape) listening to the champion tennis player, who was evidently in for a love set. On the broad piazzas dainty muslins have ceased to rustle and dainty feet to tread, their place being taken by fallen leaves which stir fitfully and chase each other into dusty corners under the win-

dows of the silent music-room, as the late autumn wind comes moaning up from the marshes. The dozen "dependent" cottages look as if they would like to run to the shelter of the hotel wings at the near approach of winter.

Among the guests who had remained to the last were the Holmeses. They had made many friends, and had learned to love the place, with its shady forest walks, its green pastures and still waters, and were sorry to go. Mrs. Holmes was not disposed to open the city house while the crisp air and mellow October sunshine still beckoned, and she took her willing household to a little hotel in the mountains known to but few of her "set," where full enjoyment of the country could be had without the restraints of conventional and fashionable life.

Early in November she returned to Boston with Hallie, leaving Miss Letitia and Annie to make a long-promised visit at their old Granite home. Norman was so far convalescent, at last reports, that he had been sent away from Manila on a transport that had brought out troops for General Merritt. With him came Ensign Saunders, by special permission of the authorities. The fact of his June wedding and departure almost immediately afterward had, perhaps, something to do with the order, for great men have hearts, and know what it is to be young and very much in love, as Mr. Henry Saun-

ders, U.S.N., undoubtedly was. Susie had remained in her own home throughout the war, and had patriotically added no inconsiderable amount to the revenues of her country in the way of postage at foreign rates. The two naval officers were expected home about December 5th, when all the family would be united and ready to receive them.

There would be at that time, or shortly afterward, a new member of the household. Mrs. Holmes had at first shaken her head decidedly on receiving Fred Larkin's letter from Santiago; and Aunt Letitia declared she should never sleep sound in her bed, for fear the house would be blown up like the *Maine*, with the Spanish girl under its roof. But Hallie and Annie had entered enthusiastically into the romantic side of the affair, and their eagerness to welcome the fair stranger, combined with the sympathies of the older members of the family for her forlorn condition, carried the day. Fred had been written to, had seen Señorita Isabella, and had hurried home, having made arrangements for her to follow six weeks later.

Of the traitor Stevens, it should be added, the reporter could learn nothing. Whether his sentence was carried out, or whether he succeeded in appeasing the Spanish authorities by some new scheme of treachery, and so escaped, no one seemed to know. Fred left no stone unturned to ascertain what his

fate had been, hoping to get a good "story" out of it for the *Bulletin*, but his efforts were in vain.

Miss Letitia and Annie were met at the Granite railway station by their old man-of-all-work, Jedediah Tompkins, who had been gunner's mate under Lieutenant Rexdale, Dave's father, in the War of the Rebellion. He had lived a lonely life on the old farm since July, when Anemone and her aunt had left the little New Hampshire town to join the Holmeses at Magnolia. Prudence Duncan, Anemone's married sister, lived near the "old Rexdale place," and Mr. Duncan, a thrifty farmer, had general oversight of Miss Letitia's affairs and stock. Tompkins was very lonely, but rolled about the farm as if he were on a steamer's deck in a high sea, and did his work faithfully, on a fair sailor's allowance of grumbling.

"Glad to see you, Tompkins," said Miss Rexdale briskly, as she alighted from the cars, followed by Annie.

The old man's eyes glistened with delight. He touched his cap, navy fashion, remarking,—

"Been waiting for the Cap'n to come on board all summer, mem, and glad enough to see you, too!"

"I hope you don't mean to sail the farm off anywhere, Jed," laughed Annie, as she took the old man's rough hand, "now that we have come."

The ex-gunner's mate muttered something regard-

ing the farm which fortunately could not be overheard, and led the way to the old-fashioned carryall.

" You get right in, ma'am, and Miss Annie, and I 'll drive ye home. Mr. Hobbs says he 'll bring your trunks up on his waggon, seein' 's he has some stuff comin' on this train for the store."

Annie, with a comical glance at her aunt, gave up the checks, and took her place in the familiar carriage.

How her childhood came back to her, as they drove along the old road toward the farm!

" There 's where I always get the first May-flowers, Auntie," she cried, pointing to a clump of pines near the wall. " Oh, there 's old Miss Parsons's house. Why, she 's had it painted red, with blue blinds! "

" She ain't Miss Parsons no longer," from the front seat. " Married a peddler four weeks ago. They had the house painted up to show red, white, an' blue, before the weddin', when the Spanish fleet was sunk."

" Why, where 's the white? " exclaimed Miss Letitia.

" Wall," said Jed, drily, delighted at having worked up to the great joke of the season at Granite, " folks say she was for paintin' the chimbley an' front fence white, but he 's a savin' critter, an' told her 't would be all right when winter come, with

the snow-drifts layin' up ag'in' the house, so they need n't have any white paint! G' lang!"

Annie's laugh rang out merrily at this and other bits of homely gossip with which the old sailor entertained his passengers.

"Oh, here's the big rock!" she cried after a while. "Drive slowly, Jed! Do you remember the coach, seven years ago?"

"I do, ma'am. She went over on her beam-ends, right into that ras'berry patch."

"Only think, Auntie, if that had not happened, the Holmeses never would have come to our house, and we would n't have known them at all, unless Dave had happened to take to Norman at the Naval Academy!"

"Yes, 't was a lucky thing all round—like a good many other upsettings in life," remarked Miss Letitia. "I certainly expected to spend all my days on this farm, an' I don't believe I could ever have spared you to anybody *but* Norman Holmes—leastways," she added, lowering her voice conscientiously, "to anybody about here, though Ezekiel Duncan 's made a good husband 's ever was to your sister."

The days in Granite passed swiftly and happily. With the home-place for a coaling station, as Annie mischievously observed, the promised visits to neighbours were made, a day or two at a time.

About the middle of November they awoke one day to find the ground white with snow. This, with a letter just received from Mrs. Holmes, reminded them that their visit was drawing to an end. It had been settled that they should spend the winter in Boston, and Annie, at least, was looking forward to her lessons in Spanish with the beautiful Andalusian girl, whose praises Fred Larkin was never tired of repeating. Now it was that Tompkins put in his plea.

"I kin work round the house, an' take care o' the furnace in winter, and drive ef I 'm wanted to. In the summer thar's the grass to mow and water. Take me along with ye, Miss Rexdale!"

"Why not, Auntie?" laughed Annie.

Miss Letitia was staggered. "Who 'll look after this old place?"

"Mr. Duncan—says it won't need lookin' after, not afore spring, anyway," said Jed. "I 've talked it over with him. It 's orful lonesome here in the winter, Miss Rexdale,—wuss 'n a lightship."

"I could write to Mrs. Holmes," admitted the maiden lady cautiously; and Jed cut a pigeon-wing stiffly in the woodshed three minutes later, for he knew she was on his side.

"An' Miss Rexdale allers did have her own way," he reflected with satisfaction.

The letter was mailed that night, and on the fol-

lowing Saturday came a favourable answer from Mrs. Holmes. "There was a spare attic," she said, "built by a former owner, on the very top of the house and reached only by a ladder. If Jedediah did not mind occupying that, she would be glad to have him come. Her son being away so much of the time, it would be a comfort to know there was a man in the house."

Tompkins's cup of happiness was now full. From the little room (which he at once began to allude to as his cabin), Annie explained that he could step directly out by a small door upon the roof. There he could smoke his pipe, when not on duty, and, she added merrily, "take observations."

The remaining days on the farm were occupied by the thrifty mistress of the manse in packing away goods, a part to remain in the deserted house over winter and a part to be shipped to Boston. Old chests in the garret were overhauled and surplus "comforters" and linen laid away in apple-pie order. Everybody was busy, and the peaceful old house was enlivened with scraps of song that floated through the dim passageways and store-closets as Annie went to and fro, glad of heart in the knowledge that she was soon to greet her brother. It was too bad, but it seemed impossible for Dave to get leave of absence, even over Christmas. He had once more been transferred, so that, to the great

relief of the girls, he did not have to accompany the *Oregon* on her long return voyage to the Pacific; but the cruiser on which he was now serving was stationed at Hampton Roads, and it was understood that she was soon to sail, either for Havana or the Mediterranean, so that he would be unable to leave her. They had planned, he and Hallie, to be married on New Year's Day, and it was a sad disappointment to both, this postponement of the wedding. "But," said sensible Hallie, "when one enters the navy, as we *all* have, what can one expect?"

Another plan, of less importance, went agley. Mrs. Holmes and her daughter had hoped to go to Portland by steamer on the last Saturday in November, remaining there over Sunday and calling on certain old acquaintances, and, meeting the Rexdales at the railroad station, come up to the city with them on the following Monday or Tuesday. Mrs. Holmes now wrote that she had a slight attack of rheumatism and did not dare to leave home; so the trip was given up; Miss Letitia thereupon deciding to go Saturday straight through to Boston by rail.

Saturday morning dawned, cold and grey. There was every sign of snow, but Jedediah pinned his faith on the Farmer's Almanac, which said plainly, "*Fair—and—cold,*" for the last week of November. When the wind chopped round to the north-east, he

wavered. "Ef I was at sea," he grumbled, "I could tell ye su'thin' about the weather. But what 's the use o' lookin' at the sky here, whar the 'rizon 's h'isted up two or three p'int's all the way 'round?"

The worst of it was that the only through trains left Granite at 3.15 A.M. and 6.45 P.M., to make connections. Of the two, Miss Letitia preferred to travel by night.

"We should have to set up pretty much all night to get the other," she said, "and feel good for nothing all day afterwards."

At six o'clock, when they said good-by to bluff, rosy-cheeked Ezekiel Duncan and his wife, the storm, if it were coming, still held off. The boxes of goods were already on their way to Boston in a freight train. Mr. Hobbs, the butcher, had once more been impressed into the service, and, with a double-seated sleigh that had seen service for a generation or more, took them down to the station, Tompkins sitting upright beside the driver, with a new sense of importance evident in his back.

Good-by to Mr. Hobbs. Good-by to the station-master and ticket-agent, both of whom had known Anemone's father when he was a boy. Good-by to the cold brown and grey landscape, with its fringe of evergreens against the leaden sky, and the whitened peaks of the far-away hills standing guard

over the little valley, silent, motionless. Good-by, oh, good-by!

"All aboard!" calls the conductor. *He* knew Annie's father, too, but there is no need of saying good-by to him yet, as he takes the train down as far as the Junction. Having punched the tickets, he stands in the aisle balancing his jolly, stout figure as the train rattles around a bend in the river, and ends by taking a seat beside Miss Letitia and chatting with her about the war and the Philippine Question and Imperialism (on which he has decided views) and old times—when the Junction is reached. Fifteen minutes later, the branch train having creaked and jerked itself over the switches on to a frosty side-track, the great express locomotive comes humming and hissing up to the station, with its train of brilliantly lighted Pullmans. Old Jed follows Annie and her aunt up the steps, and they are now really off for Boston.

Early the next morning Miss Letitia woke with a start. The train was not moving and the air was very cold. She pushed aside a corner of her curtain (Annie had taken the upper berth) and tried to peer out; but the glass was heavily frosted and she could see nothing. A dull roar sounded without, like surf on a shore, and she knew the storm had come. With a shiver she laid her head upon the pillow again and pulled the blankets up. Miss Letitia was

no longer young, and to spend several hours in a snow-bound train would be a very poor sort of a joke.

Other passengers began to stir, and grumble hoarsely and sleepily. There was a commotion in the opposite berth, and a pair of stout legs, clad in blue-yarn stockings, emerged. With the rest of his person behind the curtains, and the aforesaid blue-yarn legs protruding, as if for the porter to take away and brush, the old man-of-war's man made his toilet, and presently, having totally disappeared for a few moments, and "brought up" solidly against the neighbouring berths more than once, behold Jedediah, clothed, hat on, ready for his watch on deck!

Soon there was a general tumbling up and turning out. A new grievance was ventilated—there was no hot water to be had! The car was so cold that little puffs of steam rose angrily from the passengers as they talked and scolded. Somebody felt of the steam-pipes and announced that they were stone-cold. At this juncture the Pullman conductor, looking very unlike the smartly uniformed individual who had bade them good-night, came stamping into the anteroom at the end of the car, bringing a whole snow-drift with him as a sample of the condition of things outside.

"What 's the matter?"—"Where are we?"—

"Why don't you turn the heat on?"—"How soon are we going to start?" came a chorus of excited questions.

The conductor shook a bushel or two of snow from his coat before he answered.

"There 's a gale of wind blowing, gentlemen. Snow drifted ten feet deep in front of the locomotive. They 're keeping steam up, and can't spare it at present to heat the cars. Everything possible is being done to start the train, but until the storm lets up a little we shall have to stay right where we are and keep as comfortable as we can!"

"Comfortable!" screamed a stout, red-faced woman, who certainly looked warm enough. "In this refrigerator! Tell the engineer to go ahead! I insist that the train shall start at once!"

"Where shall we get breakfast, I wonder?" whispered Annie to her aunt, the porter having put up the beds and arranged their seats.

"I brought some doughnuts in my bag," replied Miss Letitia. "I don't see but that 's about all we 'll get this side of Boston."

As Boston was still seventy miles away, the prospect was not cheerful. Miss Rexdale divided her small store of food with a delicate-looking lady and her child, and some one appeared with a two-gallon can of milk from the baggage-car. Everybody drank from the can except the red-faced woman,

who produced a drinking-cup and used it prominently.

The day wore on. Against the frosted panes the storm roared and beat. The passengers marched up and down the aisle and into the other cars (for it was a vestibuled train), stamping their feet to keep warm. In the afternoon a small supply of steam was let into the pipes, raising the temperature a few degrees.

The nearest town was three miles away, and might as well have been a hundred in that pitiless gale of blinding snow.

"I shall get my death," said Miss Letitia resignedly. "My feet are just like blocks of ice this minute."

"Oh, Auntie, do let me put my cape round them!" pleaded Annie.

"Don't you dare, Miss! I guess I can stand it as well as you can. How do *you* feel, Jed?"

"Wall, ma'am, it 's putty chilly, but not so bad 's it might be. I remember forty year ago, when I was on the——"

But Miss Letitia's eyes close, and Tompkins, admonished by the sign, does n't go on. He tells the story later to the porter, who is penned in a corner and can't get away.

There is a commotion at the rear door of the car. A new arrival, some one says; and he is viewed as if

he had come straight from Kane's sea. Now he is talking, cheerily enough, as he beats the snow from his gloves.

"Oh, yes, we 'll have something to eat before long. There 's a farmhouse about a quarter of a mile from here" (a groan from the passengers) "where you can get some food. The men can go and bring it to the car."

Miss Letitia listens to his voice as in a dream. Then she sits upright.

"Fred Larkin," she calls out, heedless of the stares of the others, "come here this minute!"

Fred—for indeed it is no other—arrives at her side, bringing a world of helpfulness and good cheer in the glow of his cheeks and the sparkle of his eyes and the grasp of his warm hand. Fred always had warm hands, in the coldest weather.

"Well, well, well!" he cried. "You here? And Miss Annie! Well, well! Hungry? Cold? Don't say a word! I 'll fix you in a jiff!"

Before they could stop him he was out of the car again, and calling back, "Come on, you fellows! I 'll show you the way!" disappeared in the whirling chaos of snow.

Two or three of the sturdier spirits followed him, but he was the first to reach the car again, which was half an hour later. He had a huge bundle, almost as big as himself. It was wrapped in a buf-

falo robe with which he proceeded to envelop Annie and her aunt, whistling "Gentle Spring" as he tucked the warm, furry folds around their feet.

"So much for the outside," he remarked, still panting from his exertions, which had been great. "Now for the inner individual. Look at this, ma'am!"

"This" was a generous-sized squash pie, flanked by half a dozen buttered biscuit, warm if not smoking hot. But best of all, a quart bottle of tea!

"Milk and sugar all in it!" said Fred cheerfully. "'Drink pr—Miss Letitia, drink,' and pass the bottle to your niece, who plainly grudges you every drop you take!"

It was hot and delicious, that tea, and warmed the very cockles of poor Miss Letitia's heart. She fixed him with her grateful eyes as she drank like a baby.

"You blessed boy!" she gasped as she handed the bottle to Anemone. "I verily believe you've saved my life! Take some yourself before you say another word!"

But Fred would n't take any. He went through the car, joking, laughing, dispensing what spare stores he had brought, and assisting others of his sex who came staggering in with *their* stores, nearly exhausted.

That evening he organised a select chorus, and the passengers sang hymns (for somebody suddenly

remembered that it was Sunday) and patriotic songs for two hours. He sat down beside the delicate lady's little girl and told her a wonderful fairy story, until she went sound asleep with her curly head on his shoulder.

The night passed, as the longest nights will, and before the window panes grew grey with another dawn, the car gave every one a waking surprise by starting with a jerk. The storm was over, a snow-plough and force of shovellers had arrived, and the train started slowly on its way to the city, where it arrived before noon.

Fred laughed off all thanks for his services.

"All in my line," he said airily. "Splendid story for the *Bulletin*—half a column, sure—allowing for three-fifths being blue-pencilled."

It was not until they reached the warmth and glow of the Newbury Street home that the travellers heard and realised what the storm had been—one of the most terrible ever known on the New England coast. Wrecks innumerable were reported next morning and succeeding mornings for a week or more. The staunch *Portland*, on which Hallie and her mother were to have sailed for Maine, had started out from her berth last Saturday evening and disappeared forever! Only the wreckage and the poor, storm-beaten garments of a few of the hundred and fifty souls who had embarked that

fatal night of November 28th told the story of the loss of the great steamer at sea.

A week later Norman and Sandy arrived in Boston, the former still weak but rapidly regaining his health; Ensign Saunders in the best of health and spirits.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

A cold, bitter cold, December night. In the street outside, as the darkness shuts down upon the city and the electric lights flare out—for no sturdy little lamplighter, with ladder on shoulder, trots along the sidewalk nowadays, dotting his path behind him with stars—as the darkness shuts down upon the great city, the boy from the newsdealer's runs from house to house, dexterously twisting *Transcripts* and *Bulletins* and throwing them into doorways as he passes. The street-cars jingle, now once, now twice, as the home-coming passenger alights at the corner. And when we say that the home-coming passenger has his pockets filled with paper parcels, and carries several wreaths strung upon one arm, and a bunch of holly and mistletoe in the other, you guess that it is the best night in all the year,—Christmas Eve. And when you see that the home-coming passenger is a young man who has an erect figure and straightforward gait, and who marches,

evergreens and all, straight to the doorway of a certain familiar house on Newbury Street, you guess that it is Engineer Norman Holmes, U.S.N., for whom the street-car paused at the corner, and who is received at the door with a rapturous hug from a blue-eyed girl whom he calls "Hallie, dear."

"Where 's Annie?"

He has handed over the wreaths and the holly to Hallie, but keeps the mistletoe in his hand.

"Here!" replies that maiden meekly, in the shadows of the front parlour—could she have foreseen the mistletoe, that she had not turned on the electric light?

There is a great deal of laughing and talking as the three young people mount the stairs, and Aunt Letitia takes off her glasses to greet Norman and comes forward unsuspiciously, only to be caught and kissed in her turn, to the shrieking delight of the girls and the wonderment of Jed Tompkins, who is bringing up logs for the fire in the "livin'-room," as he calls it, and who shakes his head dubiously at the sight.

After supper a sharp ring at the door-bell announces "a lady and gentleman, mum, to see ye," and behold Ensign Saunders, in full uniform, with Mrs. Susie Franklin Saunders at his side. Fresh laughter, fresh experiences under the mistletoe, fresh delight; for Susie was not expected, having

been heard of at a ball in Washington only three days before. Norman, who has been once more assigned to the Charlestown Navy Yard, where a new dock, a new ropewalk, and no end of new wonders are planned, talks eagerly with his old chum and shipmate of days in the tropics and nights when the *Olympia* was "cleared for action" in the face of the enemy. Sandy brings word from Lieutenant Tickerson, too (promoted for a gallant exploit off Manzanillo), who is married and ecstatically happy. He and Grace send their love ("all mixed together," puts in Sandy, parenthetically) and the greetings of the season.

Little brown-eyed Anemone, also, is happy. For is not Norman strong and well, and is not the wedding set for Christmas Day itself? A sober look comes into Hallie's face once in a while as she sees the joy sparkling in theirs; but her nature is too sweet and sunny to let her shadow the pleasure of others, and she resolutely, with a little stamp of her foot which the others do not see, puts down and out of sight her own disappointment.

Another ring. Enter Frederic Larkin, like a north-west breeze.

"Where's Isa?"

"Upstairs, I guess," laughs Hallie. "I'll see!"

She does n't have to go far, for the Spanish girl is hiding shyly in the next room. Hallie cannot

induce her to come in, and Fred is deputed to fetch her. He cannot induce her to come in, it seems, and after a quarter of an hour Norman is despatched to fetch them both. He finds them seated side by side, talking eagerly in a Hispano-American dialect that would drive the profoundest linguist to despair.

While the three are out of the room a step is heard outside. Hallie starts to her feet, catching at the knot of holly on her breast.

The front door is opened, and a voice is heard inquiring—but Hallie does not wait to hear what he is inquiring for. She flies down the stairs, and instantly two shaggy overcoat arms of navy blue are about her, as she cries, over and over,—until he stops her mysteriously,—“ Dave! Dave!”

Explanations are due, and in the course of five minutes or so he reaches the cozy sitting-room, where Jed’s logs are throwing out great ruddy flames, and gives them. A defect in the machinery—vessel suddenly ordered docked—can’t sail for three weeks—unexpected leave of absence—and here he is, the same quiet, frank, manly Dave REXDALE of old.

“ Merry Christmas!” “ Merry Christmas!” fly the happy greetings from one to another across the little circle around the blazing fire.

Joy—love—purity—manliness—noble resolve—sweet, true lives—these will indeed make their

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Christmas, and many days to come, merry and glad.
So we will leave them all, wishing them and each
other

A Merry Christmas.

APPENDIX.

A notable characteristic of the recent war between Spain and the United States is the fact of its having been "covered," as no other war has ever been, by newspaper reporters. This has proved, from one standpoint, an embarrassment to the author, both from the superabundance of material for a book of this sort, and from the widely diffused information in the hands of the public, rendering every school-boy a censor and every country village a school for critics. On the other hand, the work of the newspaper men has vastly simplified the task of presenting a brief account of the war, and the author most heartily acknowledges the aid he has received from their correspondence with the leading dailies. Acknowledgments are also due to the proprietors of the *Nickel Magazine* and Messrs. Charles Norris and H. H. Lewis, authors respectively of *The War with Spain* and *A Gunner Aboard the "Yankee,"* works which have been often consulted in the preparation of this book. More than to any other (in conclusion), the author desires hereby to express his great

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indebtedness, in the matter of our new Eastern possessions, to Prof. Dean C. Worcester's book, *The Philippine Islands*—a work absolutely indispensable at the present time to one who wishes to acquaint himself thoroughly with the geography, people, and natural features of that interesting group of islands, seemingly destined to play so important a part in the history of nations.

THE END.

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